

**Undergraduate Use of University Archives and
Special Collections:
Motivations, Barriers and Best Practice**

Louise Clough

A dissertation submitted to Aberystwyth University in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister in
Scientia Economica (MSc Econ) under Alternative Regulations

Department of Information Studies

Aberystwyth University

2014

Abstract

With many of the nation's archives and special collections housed in universities, the purpose and aim of this study is to investigate undergraduate use of university archives and special collections with a view to increasing usage by this group. This is supported by the research question what are the motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archives and special collections?

The objectives to achieve this aim are to review current practice in the sector, to explore undergraduate and academic staff perceptions of university archives and special collections, to identify the motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use, to act as a best-practice guide for higher education archivists in encouraging greater undergraduate use of collections; and to draw conclusions and suggest how the study could be extended in future.

The main themes discovered from the literature review were relationships between the archive service and academics, librarians and undergraduates; access and promotion incorporating advertising, exhibitions, physical and digital access and cataloguing; and teaching sessions and skills.

The mixed-methods data collection focuses on sample populations of undergraduates and academic staff at the University of Gloucestershire. Undergraduate students were surveyed via an online questionnaire and academic tutors took part in a focus group.

Results showed that motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archives and special collections are multi-faceted and diverse. Student awareness such services exist needs to be raised and the most effective way of doing so is in close conjunction with their academic tutors and through the medium of archive teaching sessions relating to coursework. Despite these pressures and constraints, this study has found that undergraduates have a genuine desire to find out more about archives and special collections, and academic staff emulate that same desire for working with the service, finding it a valuable contribution to the university community.

Declaration

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed (candidate)

Date

STATEMENT 1

This work is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, then extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote(s).

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed (candidate)

Date

STATEMENT 2

I hereby give consent for my work, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

Signed (candidate)

Date

NB: Candidates on whose behalf a bar on access has been approved by the University (see Note 7), should use the following version of Statement 2:

I hereby give consent for my work, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loans after expiry of a bar on access approved by Aberystwyth University.

Signed (candidate)

Date

Contents

Abstract.....	i
Declaration.....	ii
Contents	iii
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	vii
List of Abbreviations	vii
Acknowledgements.....	viii
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose and Context of the Study.....	1
1.2 Aim and Objectives	3
1.3 Methodology.....	3
1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Research.....	4
1.5 Structure of the Dissertation	5
1.6 Introduction to the University of Gloucestershire Archives and Special Collections.....	5
2. Literature Review.....	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Literature Search.....	7
2.3 Relationships.....	9
2.3.1 Archive Service and Academics	9
2.3.3 Archive Service and Librarians.....	10
2.3.4 Archive Service and Undergraduates	12
2.4 Access and Promotion	14
2.4.1 Advertising	14
2.4.2 Exhibitions.....	15
2.4.3 Digital Expectations	16

2.4.4 Physical Environment.....	17
2.4.5 Cataloguing and Access.....	19
2.5 Teaching Sessions and Skills.....	20
2.5.1 Archive Teaching Sessions	20
2.5.2 Archive v. Library Skills.....	24
2.6 Literature Review Summary	26
3. Methodology.....	27
3.1 Introduction	27
3.2 Research Approach	27
3.3 Sampling.....	29
3.3 Undergraduate Student Questionnaire	30
3.4 Academic Focus Group	31
3.5 Ethical Issues	33
3.7 Reliability and Validity.....	34
3.8 Methods of Data Analysis	35
3.9 Limitations.....	35
3.10 Summary	37
4. Results.....	38
4.1 Introduction	38
4.2 Participants	38
4.3 Undergraduate Student Survey	39
4.3.1 General Knowledge Questions	39
4.3.2 Usage Questions	41
4.3.3 Access Questions	43
4.3.4 Advertising Questions.....	43
4.3.5 Attitudes Questions	44

4.3.6 Relationships Questions.....	47
4.4 Academic Focus Group	48
4.4.1 Attitudes to Archives and Special Collections	49
4.4.2 Subject-Specific Collections and Research	50
4.4.3 Physical Access and Use.....	51
4.4.4 Digital Access and Use	52
4.4.5 Relationships with Academics	54
4.4.6 Facilities and Physical Space	55
4.4.7 Library v. Archive Resources and Skills	55
4.4.8 Teaching and Student Interaction	56
4.5 Summary	57
5. Discussion.....	59
5.1 Introduction	59
5.2 General Understanding of Archives and Special Collections.....	59
5.3 Relationships.....	60
5.4 Access and Promotion	63
5.5 Teaching and Skills	65
5.7 Summary	66
6. Conclusion.....	68
6.1 Introduction	68
6.2 Aim and Objectives	68
6.3 Literature Review Summary	69
6.4 Methodology Summary	69
6.5 Results and Discussion Summary.....	70
6.6 Suggestions for Further Research.....	71
6.7 Conclusion.....	72

Bibliography	74
Appendix A - Literature Review Search Terms	78
Appendix B – Undergraduate Student Survey	79
Appendix C – Undergraduate Survey Invitation Email	86
Appendix D - Undergraduate Student Survey Pilot Poster	87
Appendix E - Participant Consent Form.....	88
Appendix F - Academic Focus Group Questions	89
Appendix G - Aberystwyth University Department of Information Studies Ethics Policy	90
Appendix H - Example of Coded Focus Group Transcript.....	95

15,439 words

List of Tables

Table 1: Responses for best and worst aspects of archive teaching sessions.....	42
Table 2: 33 Responses to question ‘please describe “archives and special collections” in one word’	45
Table 3: Responses to question 38 “do you know how to contact the service?”	48

List of Figures

Figure 1: Social Learning Zone at the University of Gloucestershire, Francis Close Hall campus	18
Figure 2: Undergraduate participation by course	39
Figure 3: Percentage of 49 respondents who have heard of each collection held by the University Archives and Special Collections service	40
Figure 4: Word cloud showing most common responses when 15 respondents were asked what they thought of the University Archives and Special Collections facilities (question 13)	41
Figure 5: Likert scale showing confidence levels of 43 respondents on how to access University Archives and Special Collections material	42
Figure 6: Posts viewed about the service on the Student News webpage, Library News webpage and University of Gloucestershire Libraries Facebook page.....	43
Figure 7: 32 responses for question 27 ‘do you have any suggestions on how best to advertise University Archives and Special Collections to students?’	44
Figure 8: Likert scale showing 42 responses to question 30 'how easy do you think it is to use archive material?'	46
Figure 9: Responses to question 32 'how can the service be made more relevant to you?' ..	47

List of Abbreviations

ARA – Archives and Records Association

TNA – The National Archives

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my dissertation supervisor, Dr Julie Mathias, for her helpful advice and guidance during the writing process.

I would also like to thank the students and staff at the University of Gloucestershire for taking part in this study, which I would not have been able to complete without their input.

Finally I would like to thank my family for their continued support.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Context of the Study

Many of the nation's archives and special collections are housed in universities¹. These services vary considerably in terms of size, staffing, funding and course provision of the parent institution. As with other types of archive service, university archives also face substantial cataloguing backlogs, making access to collections often difficult. One unifying factor is that most higher education institutions provide undergraduate courses, and therefore most university archive services have a potential undergraduate client base on which to focus their engagement and outreach activities. The role of the university archive, invariably incorporating special collections into the service, is two-fold. To both document and preserve the history of the parent body but also to serve the needs of the student community who are the institution's *raison d'être*.

In the experience of the author, first-time users of archives often find the experience daunting. Undergraduate students may never have engaged with primary-source material in a hands-on setting before. Digital access may not exist and the necessary rules and regulations regarding physical archive material may create barriers to student engagement. Archives and special collections services are run in differently to the campus library, something much more familiar and perhaps user-friendly to students. Student motivations for using archive material also vary. Undergraduates commonly attend the repository as part of a teaching session with their academic tutor. Others may have a personal interest in

¹ The National Archives for England and Wales surveyed the sector in 2009 and included the 134 institutions receiving monies from the Higher Education Funding Council for England and Wales (HEFCE and HEFCW). *Collections and Collecting: A Survey of University Archives* (The National Archives, October 2009). <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/collections-and-collecting-report-2009.pdf> retrieved 2 February 2014

visiting, such as curiosity about the history of the institution. These varying factors all signify very personal interactions with the service, each experience unique.

Recent changes to the undergraduate student fee structure in the UK² have resulted in some higher education institutions reviewing their teaching and support provision to ensure the best use of available resources and value for money. Services are increasingly required to prove their worth and relevance to both students and their parent institutions in this climate. This provides an opportunity to review how students interact with their institutional archives and special collections. There has also been a recent renewed interest in this area from within the sector, demonstrated by a number of recent conferences supported by both The National Archives (TNA) and the Archives and Records Association (ARA)^{3,4}.

The author of this study is currently employed as an archivist at a UK university, and therefore is motivated to investigate this area through a desire to understand how best to engage the students she interacts with on a daily basis in using the archive and special collections material in her care. This study is both a contribution to the development of scholarly knowledge in this setting and a learning curve to improve access to archives in a real-life scenario.

² Announcement of changes to tuition fees and higher education by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills on 15 December 2010 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/changes-to-tuition-fees-and-higher-education> retrieved 4 September 2014

³ Archives and Records Association Archives for Learning and Education Section annual conference “Bridging the Gap: Archives for FE/ HE Students” held at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), 24 June 2013. <http://archivelearning.blogspot.co.uk/2013/05/ales-annual-conference-bridging-gap.html> retrieved 6 February 2014

⁴ The National Archives and Research Libraries UK conference “Enhancing Impact, Inspiring Excellence: Collaborative Approaches between Archives and Universities” held at the University of Birmingham, 4 September 2013. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/enhancing-impact-inspiring-excellence.htm> retrieved 6 February 2014

1.2 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study will be to investigate undergraduate use of university archives and special collections with a view to increasing usage by this group of students. This is supported by the question what are the motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archives and special collections? The objectives to achieve this aim will be:

1. To review current practice in the sector
2. To explore undergraduate and academic staff perceptions of university archives and special collections
3. To identify the motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archives and special collections
4. To act as a best-practice guide for higher education archivists in encouraging greater undergraduate use of collections
5. To draw conclusions and suggest how the study could be extended in future

1.3 Methodology

A literature search and review will be carried out in Chapter 2 to identify current theory and examples of undergraduate archival outreach. Chapter 3 will discuss the mixed-methods approach to the study by combining an online questionnaire for undergraduate students with a focus group for academic tutors. Staff and students at the University of Gloucestershire will be used as the focus of the data gathering as an example of a small to

medium sized UK higher education institution⁵, alongside the University Archives and Special Collections service there.

Purposive sampling will be used when collecting the data. Four courses which have had interaction with the archive service through student teaching sessions in the repository will be surveyed alongside four courses who have not had any official interaction. From these eight courses, academic tutors will be invited to take part in a focus group to discuss the undergraduate use of university archives and special collections from the perspective of an academic.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Research

By centring the data gathering on participants at the University of Gloucestershire, this limits the sample population when considering the undergraduate population across all UK higher education institutions. Each university's archive service differs in terms of size, collections and staffing, and the mission and research interests of the parent institution. Online resources such as the ARCHON Directory⁶ and Archives Hub⁷ can be used to identify university archives and special collections provision across the country. By focusing on one university and one archive service, it is hoped the outcomes can be applied to other universities. The study will be limited to full-time undergraduate students, with outcomes and best practice recommendations applicable to postgraduate taught and research student sessions even though this group has been excluded for the purposes of this study. Many university archives and special collections are open to other user groups including the

⁵ The University of Gloucestershire currently has c.9,600 students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, and 820 full time equivalent staff, both academic and professional services. www.glos.ac.uk retrieved 3 February 2014

⁶ www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archon/ retrieved 3 September 2014

⁷ www.archiveshub.ac.uk retrieved 3 September 2014

public, alumni and related group members such as local archaeological societies. These groups have not been included in this study, although again some outcomes and recommendations could be applied to these groups in general terms. Higher education archivists have also not been surveyed, with the author opting to instead research the opinions of service users directly.

1.5 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter two discusses the retrieval and content of current literature in the field and the context provided for this study. Chapter three concerns the research methodology adopted to meet the aims and objectives of this study, including data collection methods, participants, ethical considerations and data analysis methods. Research findings are presented in chapter four, and the discussion of these in chapter five. The study is concluded in chapter six with a summary of how the aim and objectives have been met, and suggested ways in which the study could be extended in future.

1.6 Introduction to the University of Gloucestershire Archives and Special Collections

The University Archives and Special Collections at the University of Gloucestershire⁸ are housed at Francis Close Hall campus in Cheltenham. The service is situated within the Library and Information Services professional support department. There is currently one full-time member of staff whose responsibility it is to catalogue and make available the collections to internal and external users. There are five principal collections, including the administrative University Archive dating from the 1820s, the library of a local archaeological

⁸ www.glos.ac.uk/archives retrieved 3 February 2014

society, a literary special collection relating to Gloucestershire, the archive of a local artistic sculpture trail and the archive of a disbanded Heritage Lottery Fund subsidiary project. Total holdings comprise c.800 linear metres of material, incorporating paper-based documents, multi-media and ephemera along with digital material.

The service is open Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm to students and staff of the University of Gloucestershire, alumni members and the public. During the 2012-2013 academic year the service received 628 individual enquiries⁹. Along with the daily administration of the collections, the service offers tailored teaching sessions for individual undergraduate modules¹⁰, as well as compiling displays and providing talks. There is currently no dedicated online archive catalogue or archival management software, with collections managed using a mix of the University's library catalogue¹¹, Microsoft Office applications stored on a staff server, PDF listings on the service website and a defunct database accessed via the archive staff PC.

The following Literature Review chapter will establish current practice and research in undergraduate outreach and provide context for placing the University of Gloucestershire Archives and Special Collections service within this landscape.

⁹ Statistics held by the University of Gloucestershire Archives and Special Collections

¹⁰ During the 2012-2013 academic year, the service provided eight tailored undergraduate teaching sessions lasting 1-2 hours for Art and Design, Sociology, English Language and History courses. During the 2013-2014 academic year to March 2014 additional sessions have been provided for English Language, Creative Media, Graphic Design and Documentary Photography undergraduate modules

¹¹ <http://opac.glos.ac.uk/> retrieved 3 September 2014

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The first and third objectives of this study are to review current practice regarding undergraduate use of archives and special collections in the higher education sector, and identify the motivations and barriers affecting student use. This has been conducted through a search and review of current literature, dividing the findings by thematic area. 'Relationships' are the bonds between the archive service and academics, library colleagues, and the undergraduates themselves. 'Access and promotion' incorporates the physical environment of the archive service, advertising, access both physically and digitally and the cataloguing of collections. 'Teaching sessions and skills' focuses on critical thinking and information literacy, student teaching sessions using archive material and the role of the archivist as teacher.

2.2 Literature Search

A number of techniques and search tools were used to scope the available literature. The Discovery Service¹² provided by the University of Gloucestershire Libraries, Primo by Aberystwyth University¹³, JSTOR¹⁴ and Google Scholar¹⁵ were all used to find relevant books, articles and dissertations. Search terms were used to locate relevant content (Appendix 1). The author also browsed relevant library shelves at both Aberystwyth and

¹² <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/search/basic?sid=62177381-5dd8-4933-b116-f3ce630a9001%40sessionmgr111&vid=1&hid=115> retrieved 5 April 2014

¹³

http://primo.aber.ac.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?dscnt=1&dstmp=1396700422524&vid=ABER_U_VU1&fromLogin=true retrieved 5 April 2014

¹⁴ <http://www.jstor.org/> retrieved 5 April 2014

¹⁵ <http://scholar.google.co.uk/> retrieved 5 April 2014

Gloucestershire university libraries. The referencing of other works found in publications was used to discover further relevant material.

The majority of published literature came from the United States. This could be due to there being far more higher education institutions than in the UK, although British activity in the area of undergraduate use of archives and special collections is evident on numerous blogs and project websites¹⁶. The U.S. education system differs from the UK in providing two-year associate qualifications through colleges and four-year bachelor degrees at universities. Much of the literature came from archivists working at college campuses.

Another point to note is that a greater emphasis is placed on 'special collections' rather than 'archives' in some of the literature, with many of the authors described as 'Special Collections Librarian' rather than 'Archivist'. Allison Cullingford defines special collections as 'many kinds of material: early printed books, manuscripts, pamphlets, ephemera, maps, photographs, archives, newspapers, digital files and much more'¹⁷. Although special collections can include archives, they are not administrative archive collections such as the University Archive at the University of Gloucestershire. Special collections are often comprised of books, with the authors of much of the literature having come from a library background. Although the format covered in some of the literature may be centred on book collections, the essence of undergraduate outreach using these, special collections incorporating material such as manuscripts and artworks, or purely archival material, remains broadly similar. Each effort is being made to increase undergraduate use of archives and special collections, whatever their format. To maintain the relevancy of the

¹⁶ For example Birmingham City University Art & Design Archives <http://www.archivesandcreativepractice.com/> retrieved 9 April 2014, and The National Fairground Archive at the University of Sheffield <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/national-fairground-archive.htm> retrieved 9 April 2014

¹⁷ A. Cullingford, *The Special Collections Handbook* (London: Facet Publishing, 2011) p.xi

literature in setting the context of this study, only literature from 2000 onwards has been included.

2.3 Relationships

2.3.1 Archive Service and Academics

One of the key areas highlighted in the literature is the relationship between the archive service and academic tutor. Academics are the members of staff who have the most interaction with undergraduates, and are the key contacts for organising archival teaching sessions. Mulder and Jones have highlighted the importance of the academic's willingness to engage with the archive service. As with students, they have to know the service exists and what it has to offer. A special collections outreach project at Wake Forest Library in North Carolina is directed by an academic¹⁸, highlighting the relationship between academic and archivist when it comes to designing and implementing archival teaching sessions. Perceptions of the archive service by the academic may differ depending on whether the service is seen purely as a 'support' function rather than a catalyst for academic research.

Archivists may find that rather than waiting for the academic to engage with the service, they need to actively identify and approach academics for potential collaboration. Nova Seals purposefully targeted architectural studies academics for a new collaborative partnership after reviewing course listings at Connecticut College¹⁹. The relevant academic then visited and spoke to the archivist multiple times whilst planning the new course

¹⁸ M. Mulder & C. Jones, 'Putting the Material in Materiality: The Embedded Special Collections Librarian' in E. Mitchell, P. Seiden & S. Taraba (eds.), *Past or Portal? Enhancing Undergraduate Learning through Special Collections and Archives* (Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2012) p.71

¹⁹ N. M. Seals, 'Building a New Model: Faculty-Archivist Collaboration in Architectural Studies' in Mitchell et. al., *Past or Portal?* p.93

module. A similar technique would be to look at the learning outcomes of each course to assess how archive involvement could contribute towards these.

In a study on archival research activity, Xiaomu Zhou analysed the role of the academic tutor in helping students prepare for an archive orientation session. Zhou found that it was important for academics to alert their students to research topics and the archive service early in their studies, and also to have knowledge of the material held by the archive service²⁰. This suggests that a preliminary orientation activity for academics may be beneficial for increasing their knowledge and understanding of archive material. It is important the academic values the role of the archivist both as a fellow professional and their contribution to the student learning process.

Another study of university archives and educational partnerships by Peter Wosh and colleagues found that poor communication between the academic and archive service is likely to hinder successful collaboration. Wosh also acknowledges that administrative pressures on the archivist hinders their ability to fully contribute to an extensive faculty-archive teaching programme²¹. Insufficient guidance from academics on which archive materials they would like to use in a teaching session, or last minute preparation, is likely to result in a disappointing experience for all concerned.

2.3.3 Archive Service and Librarians

Just as archivists are specialists in our field, librarians are subject-specialists for the group of courses they are responsible for²². This can be of benefit to the archivist who is

²⁰ X. Zhou, 'Student Archival Research Activity: An Exploratory Study', in *The American Archivist* Vol. 71 No. 2 (Fall-Winter 2008) p.482

²¹ P. J. Wosh, J. Bunde, K. Murphy & C. Blacker, 'University Archives and Educational Partnerships: Three Perspectives', in *Archival Issues* Vol. 31 No. 1 (2007) p.87

²² Mulder & Jones, 'Embedded Special Collections Librarian' p.73

trying to establish a new archive teaching session for a course they have no subject knowledge of, or to take advantage of the librarian's network of academic contacts which may be more established. As a sister profession, it is often assumed that librarians have an affinity with archivists and understand the issues associated with archival outreach. However, as Elizabeth Yakel discovered in her study on researchers and primary sources, the lack of archival knowledge amongst librarians is tangible and can result in the user missing out on the right information if they have approached their subject librarian in the first instance²³. It is essential librarians understand archival issues and together with the archive service should celebrate what makes archives unique rather than attempting to homogenise the two²⁴.

Lessons can be learnt from librarians and their outreach efforts. The University of Colorado took the innovative approach of hiring an 'Instruction Librarian' whose role is to focus on special collections outreach and teaching. Since 2001 there has been a 75% increase in the number of classes receiving tailored special collections instruction²⁵. Although this instance assumes there is the funding to recruit such a post, it is a good example of how successful such a role can be. Other examples from the literature including Beth Whittaker's article on the challenges of providing access to special collections assume there is scope to divide archive and special collections staff by function²⁶. There are many archive services in UK universities staffed by a lone archivist, Gloucestershire included. Such

²³ E. Yakel, 'Listening to Users' in *Archival Issues* Vol. 26 No. 2 (2002) p.63

²⁴ T. Samuelson & C. Coker, 'Mind the Gap: Integrating Special Collections Teaching' in *portal: Libraries and the Academy* Vol. 14 No. 1 (2014) p.65

²⁵ B. Lossoff, C. Sinkinson & E. Newsom, 'Special Collections Instruction in the Sciences: A Collaborative Model' in Mitchell et. al., *Past or Portal?* p.137

²⁶ B. M. Whittaker, "'Get It, Catalog It, Promote It": New Challenges to Providing Access to Special Collections' in *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts and Cultural Heritage* Vol. 7 No. 2 (2006) p.122

instances make collaboration with library colleagues to achieve such results pertinent when the sole member of archive staff has to juggle a number of functions.

Both Nova Seals and Mulder and Jones discuss the concept of the 'embedded librarian' in their literature. In both examples, the special collections librarian mirrors the subject librarian in attending class sessions at intervals throughout a module and physically outside the environment of the special collections service. Whereas Seals only attended the first session of a class²⁷, Mulder and Jones attended all class sessions in lecture and seminar rooms to provide specialist support on-hand in the class itself²⁸. This on-going presence enables the student to become more familiar with the member of special collections staff and disperses the reliance on students visiting the service under their own initiative. By 'embedding' the special collections staff within their everyday teaching environment, this emulates similar examples of work already being done by subject librarians to be less fixed to a reference desk.

2.3.4 Archive Service and Undergraduates

The bond the service establishes with students determines the success or failure of student interaction with the service. Unfortunately, the cliché that archives and archivists are dull and dusty still prevails in some areas²⁹. Some interesting examples in the literature investigate the treatment of undergraduates as equal learning partners when using archives and special collections material, rather than strictly customers or novice users. Ellen Swain discusses an example at the University of Illinois of the Student Life and Culture Archive Programme recruiting 'student consultants' to lead a student-focused documentation

²⁷ Seals, 'Building a New Model' p.94

²⁸ Mulder & Jones, 'Embedded Special Collections Librarian' p.72

²⁹ A rather humorous website 'Dusty Archive Kitten Deaths' collates examples of stereotypical descriptions of archives as musty or dusty. <http://dustyarchivekittendeaths.tumblr.com/> retrieved 6 May 2014

strategy to record life on campus³⁰. The programme formed part of a module on which the students were assessed and gained credits. Their outputs focused on topics such as the history of the university and comparing objects or experiences from past student life. Archive services often struggle to document the present student experience, particularly if they do not attempt to do this in conjunction with the student body or are perceived to be a store of old information by the wider institution. Getting students to lead such projects in partnership makes the archive service wholly relevant to their time at university. Such collaborations are mutually beneficial, the student gaining transferable skills such as project management and the archive receiving the outputs³¹. Swain also discusses the establishment of a permanent Student Advisory Committee, a direct way in which to engage students with the service and scope its future direction³². This helps to maintain the relevance of the service to students and their involvement with it.

A similar documentation strategy directly involving students has been carried out at the University of Oregon. Students were required to keep a journal during their first year as part of a skills-based module. A student diary from 1915 was used as inspiration for the students and to compare similarities and differences with the current student experience. The activity was then expanded to include web 2.0 journals and a virtual student community was established via a wiki. The evolution of the course was directly linked to the evolving student experience³³. Both the Oregon and Illinois examples show successful ways of

³⁰ E. D. Swain, 'College Student as Archives' Consultant? A New Approach to Outreach Programming on Campus' in *Archival Issues* Vol. 29 No. 2 (2005) p. 113

³¹ At Illinois, outputs from the Student Life and Culture Archive Programme were added to the digital institutional repository

³² Swain, 'College Student' p.117

³³ H. Briston, 'Student as Historian/ Student as Historical Actor: Documenting the Student Experience at the University of Oregon' in Mitchell et. al., *Past or Portal?* pp.169-174

establishing relevant relationships with students, although both are reliant on embedding into the academic curriculum.

In his work on introducing undergraduate students to archives and special collections, Greg Johnson discusses the concept of 'archival anxiety' amongst students³⁴. This can be brought on by a number of factors such as the lack of knowledge about what using an archive entails, rules about food, drink, handling and security measures. Any new experience can feel alien, but once students are knowledgeable about how archives work this anxiety of the unknown is relieved. Johnson lists the interaction with an archivist to access material rather than being instantly self-sufficient as a further contributor to archival anxiety³⁵. Arguably, this reliance on staff interaction helps rather than hinders undergraduate understanding of archival procedures and access to special collections and archive material.

In order to build successful relationships with students and colleagues, the archive service must consider what steps it takes to promote the service's existence, along with access considerations.

2.4 Access and Promotion

2.4.1 Advertising

Much of the literature assumes both undergraduates and academics are already visiting the archive service or even know it exists. It is almost impossible to get undergraduates to use archives if they do not know where the service is located, how to contact it and what it does. Tamar Chute conducted research into archival outreach by

³⁴ G. Johnson, 'Introducing Undergraduate Students to Archives and Special Collections' in *College & Undergraduate Libraries* Vol. 13 No. 2 (2006) pp.91-100

³⁵ Johnson, 'Introducing Undergraduate Students' p.93

interviewing archivists at eight colleges and universities³⁶. Although the author acknowledges her research is not an attempt to produce a scientifically accurate study, it does provide useful definitions of direct versus indirect outreach techniques. Chute's view is that outreach should be the core function of the archivist 'even at the expense of other archival functions'³⁷. Although outreach is a key function, it should not come at the expense of other core duties such as arrangement and description of material. It would seem a wasted effort to encourage large numbers of undergraduates into the service if there are no access tools such as online catalogues and finding aids to utilise. Chute's recommendation of targeting different user groups separately mirrors the 'customer-service driven and user-centred' 'aggressive advertising' as advocated by Harris and Weller³⁸.

2.4.2 Exhibitions

Exhibitions can be a powerful outreach tool with instant results. Digital exhibitions are increasing in popularity and can further increase the audience of an archive service, particularly at multi-campus institutions³⁹. Deidre Stam has questioned whether exhibitions are worth the large amount of effort put into them, arguing that they often 'lack a clear message, a narrative arc, and/ or labels that clearly relate items to the theme'⁴⁰. She advocates that archivists should take inspiration from exhibitions mounted by museum

³⁶ T. G. Chute, 'Selling the College and University Archives: Current Outreach Perspectives' in *Archival Issues* Vol. 25 No. 1-2 (2000) p.36

³⁷ *Ibid*, p.33

³⁸ V. A. Harris & A. C. Weller, 'Use of Special Collections as an Opportunity for Outreach in the Academic Library', in *Journal of Library Administration* Vol. 52 No. 3-4 (2012) p.296

³⁹ Examples of online exhibitions by university archive services include "Here, look after him': los niños, refugee children from the Spanish Civil War' by the University of Southampton Special Collections, <http://viewer.soton.ac.uk/viewer/image/basque1/1/#head> retrieved 17 April 2014, and a variety of examples from the University of Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections service, <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/exhibitions/online/about.aspx> retrieved 17 April 2014

⁴⁰ D. C. Stam, 'Bridge That Gap! Education and Special Collections' in *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts and Cultural Heritage* Vol. 7 No. 1 (2006) p.21

professionals. Archivists should plan an exhibition schedule, perhaps over an academic year, to ensure the quality and message of an exhibition and the timescales involved. Peter Wosh believes a dedicated online student exhibition space can be beneficial for students to exhibit the work they produce whilst working with archives and special collections⁴¹. This is advantageous as an output of an archive project on which students have already engaged, and may encourage their peers to visit the service for the first time, although again relies on some students having already used the archive service.

2.4.3 Digital Expectations

Much of the literature assumes services have established online catalogues and finding aids when small, under-funded or newly established archive services may not. This is a large and fundamental barrier to any user being able to find archive material with relative ease, and can also hinder archive staff. Digitisation is often seen as the way to increase access to collections by parent organisations. Beth Whittaker argues the digitisation of print material is 'easy enough'⁴². However, the cost, staffing issues and timescales involved in such work may be a barrier for many services even before consideration is given to what material should be digitised and why. Digitisation of material and online tutorials may provide instant interactions between the student and archive material, but again these need to be advertised.

When access to archive material through catalogues and digitised images is available online, several examples from the literature take a more cautious approach to this provision. Duff and Cherry warn digital archives can in fact 'erode' the relationship between

⁴¹ Wosh et. al., 'University Archives and Educational Partnerships' p.87

⁴² Whittaker, 'New Challenges' p.128

the user and the archivist, as personal interaction between the two is lost⁴³. Samuelson and Coker advocate the value placed on staff knowledge by the user⁴⁴. It is difficult to balance the desire of the user to access material digitally, and the desire of the archivist to guide and impart knowledge in person. Drawing on the experience of librarians, the use of a live online chat function may help to re-establish a personal link for remote users of an archive service. However, this could not be available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year as digital archival content is, and still may not match the support and advice an archivist is able to give in person.

2.4.4 Physical Environment

It is vastly important for students to know where the service is located, and as far as possible to make the physical environment as welcoming as possible. Many services are located in basements, or tucked away in a remote location on (or sometimes off) campus. It can be challenging to make such spaces a welcoming and practical learning environment for students. Simple things like signage can reduce the barriers to student use of archives. The service may be physically separate from the campus library by walls or even buildings, therefore it may be beneficial to use the same style of signage or decoration found in the library if the archive service is part of that department to increase a sense of belonging.

Shared spaces may help to increase awareness of the archive service and make it less of a daunting experience if the student has used the space before for other purposes. Despite the obvious security and preservation issues, creating a space the students feel they have ownership of could be beneficial. At the University of Gloucestershire, the archive

⁴³ W. M. Duff & J. M. Cherry, 'Archival Orientation for Undergraduate Students: An Exploratory Study of Impact' in *The American Archivist* Vol. 71 No. 2 (Fall – Winter 2008) p. 499

⁴⁴ Samuelson & Coker, 'Mind the Gap' p.58

service is located in the 'Social Learning Zone', an area where students are encouraged to make use of the space for individual and group study (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Social Learning Zone at the University of Gloucestershire, Francis Close Hall campus

The staff desk and secure reference area are located through an archway at the top left of the photograph. Since the changes were made to the room in Summer 2013, utilisation of the space by students has dramatically increased, although whether this has led to increased awareness and use of the archive service will be discussed later in this study.

In her article on special collections study in the campus classroom, Anne Bahde suggests that taking material out of the service and into the classroom is one way to alleviate the pressures of inadequate teaching space within the service itself⁴⁵. If security and preservation issues are carefully weighed, this could ease the archival anxiety

⁴⁵ A. Bahde, 'Taking the Show on the Road: Special Collections Instruction in the Campus Classroom' in *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts and Cultural Heritage* Vol. 12 No. 2 (2011) pp.75-88

associated with first-time use of archive material by engaging with the students in their familiar classroom environment.

2.4.5 Cataloguing and Access

As a profession, emphasis has gradually shifted from 'stewardship' of collections to improving 'access' to them⁴⁶, although arguably one is dependent upon the other. The tension between preserving material and sharing it is always present. As Roff points out in her work on teaching undergraduates historical research methods, the serendipity of browsing in the library or on the internet is removed in a physical archive setting⁴⁷. This places greater need on students' understanding that archival research is often not instantly gratifying, but that much of the pleasure comes from what you discover through your efforts.

Cataloguing becomes the tool an archivist can use to open up hidden collections. In her study on the experiences of novice student users of online archive finding aids, Rita Johnston found the organisation and language used can prove to be as much of a barrier to access as an aide to it. Undergraduates first need to understand what a finding aid is, where and how to use it. Although the nature of conducting a study observing participants under a test situation may influence their behaviour and therefore affect results, her findings show a general correlation between a student's web browsing and PC skills and success in using archive finding aids⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ D. Malkmus, "'Pulling on the White Gloves... is Really Sort of Magic": Report on Engaging History Undergraduates with Primary Sources', in Mitchell et. al., *Past or Portal?* p.129

⁴⁷ S. Roff, 'Archives, Documents, and Hidden History: A Course to Teach Undergraduates the Thrill of Historical Discovery Real and Virtual' in *The History Teacher* Vol. 40 No. 4 (August 2007) pp.551-552

⁴⁸ R. D. Johnston, *A Qualitative Study of the Experiences of Novice Undergraduate Students with Online Finding Aids* (Unpublished masters thesis, School of Information and Library Science, University of North Carolina, November 2008). <http://ils.unc.edu/mspapers/3452.pdf> retrieved 11 December 2013

Beth Whittaker has stated that cataloguers 'are no longer "gatekeepers" of description or intellectual access' due to online finding aids⁴⁹. Arguably, the very act of arranging and describing material makes cataloguers gatekeepers of user understanding. Having multiple databases and access points to collections only serve as a further barrier to users connecting with material, something repositories without dedicated archive management software have to cope with. Both Whittaker and Barbara Jones advocate the benefits of collection-level cataloguing as an attempt to provide broader access to more material, although both acknowledge that cataloguing backlogs will not be reduced if it is used as an initiative in isolation. Jones states that user access needs should be considered when designing a cataloguing project to reduce a backlog⁵⁰. Much of the challenge of getting undergraduates to use archive catalogues and finding aids is alerting them to the fact they are there.

2.5 Teaching Sessions and Skills

2.5.1 Archive Teaching Sessions

Much of the literature focuses on teaching sessions by archive services for undergraduates as part of their course. Teaching sessions are broadly categorised as either general orientation classes or more subject-specific teaching using selected material on a particular topic. The latter may or may not have a particular assignment or credit-weighting attached to it, and may or may not require compulsory attendance by the student.

In Duff and Cherry's qualitative study on the impact of archive orientation sessions for undergraduate students, they identified five types of archive instruction. These ranged

⁴⁹ Whittaker, 'New Challenges' p.127

⁵⁰ B. M. Jones, 'Hidden Collections, Scholarly Barriers: Creating Access to Unprocessed Special Collections Materials in America's Research Libraries' in *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* Vol. 5 No. 2 (2004) p.96

from brief one-on-one interactions as part of the student induction programme, physical tours of the archive including information on policies and procedures, online or in-situ tutorials on using archive material, one-off classes of one and a half to three hours long using selected material, and whole module sessions directly focused on using archive materials for research and the application of critical thinking⁵¹. Such a wide range of archive-undergraduate interactions are accompanied by different motivations for undergraduates using the archive service, and varying levels of commitment by archive staff.

The literature highlights that the value of basic orientation sessions should not be underestimated. Zhou's study on student archival research found that teaching basic archive skills such as how to use finding aids, how archive material is arranged and housekeeping matters such as opening hours were the most important elements of an orientation session to students⁵². This emphasises the importance of the design of orientation sessions, and deciding on the fundamental information the student needs when balanced with the duration of the class. Although Zhou's research is based on the participants of an established orientation session, the results are valuable for showing what students identify as the fundamental skills they require.

Peter Wosh and colleagues comment on students benefiting from a general orientation session, followed by subject-specific classes. They also stress the timing of the orientation as critical if it is given too early or late for the student to apply skills gained from the session to their work⁵³. The type and timing of the session the student receives depends greatly on the relationship the archive service develops with the academic leading the

⁵¹ Duff and Cherry, 'Archival Orientation' pp. 501-502

⁵² Zhou, 'Research Activity' pp. 483-484

⁵³ Wosh et. al., 'University Archives and Educational Partnerships' p.84, 87

course. Staffing levels of the service also impact on the commitment a repository can provide if required to put on multiple teaching sessions for multiple courses. Evaluation of archive teaching sessions is to be encouraged to ensure they are relevant to student needs. Toolkits such as those offered by the Archival Metrics project at the University of Michigan can be beneficial for introducing standardised methods of assessment⁵⁴.

Adopting a simple session structure that can be tailored to different classes has been advocated by Julia Walworth through her work with students at Merton College, Oxford. The sessions incorporate a brief introduction by the archivist and academic, then student hands-on time with the material whilst working through questions about it, followed by a group discussion⁵⁵. Using this technique may be beneficial for the lone archivist or small archives team under time constraints. It may also work better in institutions where there are smaller class sizes, although larger course intakes could be split and more than one session provided. Certainly when considering the physical handling demands on archive material, smaller class sizes would be preferred. Elizabeth Yakel has challenged what she terms the 'one-size fits all approach to archival user education'⁵⁶. From her research interviewing student archive users, she found that different users had different needs when it came to what they deemed to be important to them in terms of archive teaching sessions. This highlights the importance of the continuing role of the archivist in their relationship with users. Students should have the option of coming back to the archive service for personal research and one-on-one help from archive staff after generic orientation sessions.

It is important to consider how archive staff can equip students with the skills to find material held by other services. Janet Bunde and Karen Murphy at New York University

⁵⁴ <http://www.archivalmetrics.org/> retrieved 6 May 2014

⁵⁵ J. Walworth, 'Oxford University: 'Speed-dating' in Special Collections: A Case Study' in Mitchell et. al., *Past or Portal?* pp.30-34

⁵⁶ Yakel, 'Listening to Users' p.63

Archives have questioned whether archivists are presenting skewed perceptions of using services to students in providing tailored teaching sessions⁵⁷. By giving students preferential treatment during the sessions, such as bending the rules on how many items they can look at or altering standard reprographic practices, this could lead to disappointment when returning to the service at a later date or when visiting another repository as a standard user. Nova Seals has claimed that student teaching sessions centred on one assignment leaves no opportunity for undergraduates to learn how archives are organised or how to carry out 'strategic' archival research⁵⁸. Much depends on the service, and it should not be assumed that every service has access to cataloguing software and an online catalogue. Although much of the literature focuses on established archive teaching sessions, it is important to consider the perceptions and needs of those undergraduates who do not connect with the service via a teaching session.

The archivist plays an important role in student teaching sessions, either as a facilitator to an academic leading the session or taking on the role of teacher themselves. Archivists are usually the staff who best know the material being consulted in the teaching session, and therefore play a vital role in imparting this knowledge to students. The rapport the archivist develops with the undergraduate can enhance their experience of using the material, and as with any teacher can be a source of inspiration. Sandra Roff urges the archivist to remain impartial in their role as teacher, acknowledging they can impact on how students interpret the primary source material presented to them⁵⁹. This could also be extended to non-direct forms of interaction such as cataloguing descriptions or exhibitions.

⁵⁷ Wosh et. al., 'University Archives and Educational Partnerships' p.92

⁵⁸ Seals, 'Building a New Model' p.92

⁵⁹ Roff, 'Archives, Documents, and Hidden History' p.556

Magia Krause has studied the role of archive staff in undergraduate archival instruction using semi-structured interviews. She found the role of the archivist in undergraduate teaching was invaluable to positive and productive student use of collections, although this contribution went largely unrecognised by either academic colleagues, the wider institution or the archive staff themselves⁶⁰. Both Krause and Deirdre Stam⁶¹ discuss with concern that archivists are not given any training on how to be educators during their professional qualifications.

2.5.2 Archive v. Library Skills

Many universities, including Gloucestershire, place great emphasis on transferable skills such as information literacy and how these enhance the employability of students⁶². Yakel and Torres have explored the notion of 'archival intelligence' as the level of researcher knowledge of archives and how to use them⁶³. They used semi-structured interviews of 28 primary-source users at the University of Michigan to determine their knowledge of how archives are arranged, along with the ability of the user to solve problems and their 'intellective skills'. Their results highlight that users with a greater grasp of the mechanics of how archives are arranged and managed were more confident researchers with greater 'archival intelligence'. These users internalized archive access rules, familiarizing themselves in a similar way to library rules which are understood more widely. They concluded that expert users of archives emerge when archive rules become accepted as the norm in a

⁶⁰ M. G. Krause, "It Makes History Alive for them": the Role of Archivists and Special Collections Librarians in Instructing Undergraduates', in *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* Vol. 36 No. 5 (2010) pp.401-411

⁶¹ Stam, 'Bridge That Gap!' p.20

⁶² The University of Gloucestershire has an Employability Hub which co-ordinates the DegreePlus internship initiative and Employability Award, where through academic study and extra-curricular activities a student develops a skills-based CV. <http://insight.glos.ac.uk/DEPARTMENTS/EMPLOYABILITY/Pages/default.aspx> retrieved 3 June 2014

⁶³ E. Yakel & D. A. Torres, 'AI: Archival Intelligence and User Expertise' in *The American Archivist* Vol. 66 No. 1 (Spring-Summer 2003) pp.51-78

similar way to library rules, allowing the user to concentrate on their research⁶⁴. Although generic search strategies can be employed in any number of different academic libraries, the unique nature of each archive repository, the material within it, the array of finding aids available and the individual nature of personal research makes increased archival intelligence difficult to obtain. In a separate study, Yakel notes that the archival intelligence of students is lower than archivists predict⁶⁵. A term-long module of sustained archive involvement by students would naturalise them to the archive environment.

There are opportunities for archives to enhance the critical thinking skills of undergraduates due to the nature of primary source materials and the importance of provenance in an archive setting. Marcus Robyns has identified the development of external and internal criticism as areas of critical thinking that can be directly aided through archive research⁶⁶. External criticism involves the establishment of provenance when analysing a document, with the archivist directly affecting how sources are interpreted through arrangement and description. Internal criticism is the process by which the researcher interprets the source once provenance is established. This can include the identification of bias and the meaning of a document, fundamental research skills. As Robyns states, archivists in academic settings are well placed to embed their teaching provision in the critical thinking landscape⁶⁷, although again much depends of the positioning of the service and standing with academic and library colleagues alike.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p.66

⁶⁵ Yakel, 'Listening to Users' p.53

⁶⁶ M. C. Robyns, 'The Archivist as Educator: Integrating Critical Thinking Skills into Historical Research' in *The American Archivist* Vol. 64 No. 2 (Fall-Winter 2001) pp.363-384

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p.372

2.6 Literature Review Summary

The literature on undergraduate use of archives and special collections and the motivations for and barriers to use is multi-faceted and diverse. Many factors impact on the success or failure of student interaction with an archive repository, including the relationships between the service and undergraduates, library colleagues, and academic staff. The literature suggests resources available to the service in terms of staffing, space, cataloguing software and advertising all impact on undergraduate use of archives. Much of the literature assumes archive services have basic provisions such as an online catalogue, and that students and academics are already engaged with the service and using the material. Much of the research has been carried out on students already participating in established archive teaching sessions, or taking a 'before and after' approach centred on these sessions.

The literature review has highlighted two key areas to focus the following methodology of this study. Undergraduate students who both have and have not participated in archive teaching sessions will be surveyed in order to capture the perceptions of both. Students who had not previously interacted with an archive service are under-represented in the literature. Academic staff will also be surveyed as key players in the relationship between archive repository and student. The following methodology chapter will discuss the research approach used in this study.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The following methodology chapter will discuss the research approach and methods used in this study, ethical issues surrounding data collection, sampling and coding techniques, methods of data analysis used, the reliability and validity of the data and any limitations.

3.2 Research Approach

A literature search and review has been carried out to fulfil the first objective of this study, to review current practice in the sector. Objective two, exploring undergraduate student and academic staff perceptions of university archives and special collections, and objective three, identifying motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate student use of university archives and special collections, will be met through the data gathering and analysis part of this study.

A mixed-methods approach has been adopted for this study. Creswell and Plano Clark define mixed-methods research as ‘collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies’⁶⁸. Triangulation of the data will also be conducted. Bryman defines triangulation as using different research methods, either quantitative or qualitative, to cross-check results from each as part of a research strategy⁶⁹. The triangulation of results aims to bring together the strengths of both quantitative and

⁶⁸ J. W. Creswell & V. L. Plano Clark, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2007) p.5

⁶⁹ A. Bryman, *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) p.611

qualitative data collection methods and analysis, in order to improve the validity and reliability of the research⁷⁰.

As mixed-methods approaches incorporate both quantitative and qualitative methods, the philosophical standpoints of mixed-methods researchers can differ widely. This study takes an inductive approach, starting with the collection and analysis of data to identify relationships and themes, rather than defining a hypothesis to be tested. The study is looking at the attitudes and perceptions of people, and the potential reasons behind these. The constructionist ontological stance believes that people's views are shaped by their social relations and personal backgrounds⁷¹, and the interpretive epistemological view requires the researcher to 'grasp the subjective meaning of social action'⁷². Both can be applied to this study.

Data has been gathered using two methods. Undergraduate students were surveyed using an online questionnaire and academic staff took part in a focus group. Both of these methods have been used to explore the undergraduate and academic perceptions of archives and special collections. The data gathered from both methods will be cross-referenced together with the literature review findings in the discussion chapter. The author did consider interviewing selected participants of the student survey rather than conducting the academic focus group. This approach was not adopted as the author was interested to discover the attitudes of academics and whether these had any correlation with the results of the student survey.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p.62

⁷¹ Creswell & Plano Clark, *Mixed Methods Research* p.22

⁷² Bryman, *Social Research Methods* p.694

3.3 Sampling

Rather than attempt to survey the whole student population of c.8000 undergraduates and c.300 full time equivalent academic staff at the University of Gloucestershire, a purposive sampling method was adopted. Creswell and Plano Clark define 'purposive' sampling as 'researchers intentionally select[ing] participants who have experience with the central phenomenon or key concept being explored'⁷³. Four undergraduate courses whose students had received archive teaching sessions were surveyed with four courses that had no previous interaction. This was to ensure a mix of students who had used the service with those who had not, in order to survey the perceptions of both categories of undergraduate. The names of all courses having had archive teaching sessions and those that had not were placed in two respective hats and four were drawn from each to ensure the courses in both categories had an equal chance of being picked. These were English Language, History, Creative Media and Illustration for courses having had archive teaching sessions and Sports Development, Education Studies, Biosciences and Religion, Philosophy and Ethics for those that had not. A total of 745 undergraduate students⁷⁴ made up the sample population of the eight courses, slightly under 10% of the whole undergraduate population of the university. Eight academics were invited to take part in the focus group, one from each undergraduate course. These academics had also been asked to send the student survey link out to the students on that course. For the four courses who had participated in archive sessions, the tutor who led the session was invited. For the four courses who had not had a teaching session, the course leader was invited as the main contact for that particular course. Participants were invited to ask a colleague from their course to attend the focus group if they could not.

⁷³ Creswell & Plano Clark, *Mixed Methods Research* p.112

⁷⁴ Undergraduate years 1 to 3 of standard 3-year degrees

3.3 Undergraduate Student Questionnaire

A self-completion questionnaire of forty-one questions was administered to the sample group of 745 undergraduate students. This method was chosen as simple to set up and administer to a large group of participants. The questionnaire was run via a SurveyMonkey online poll⁷⁵ from 17 March to 7 April 2014 (Appendix B). An invitation to take part in the questionnaire with a hyperlink from the author of this study was distributed via email to the sample undergraduate population via their course tutors (Appendix C). The completion date for questionnaires was stated on the email. Participation was voluntary and an incentive was offered by the chance to win a £30 Amazon voucher. As Gomm points out, researchers offer incentives to participants in order to minimise non-response⁷⁶.

Participants were invited to leave their name and contact email at the end of the survey, although this information was removed and treated separately from the survey data so as not to link individuals to their responses. The front page of the survey outlined the purpose of the questionnaire, information about voluntary participation, which statements of ethics were followed and what would happen to the data the participants provided.

Before being sent out to the main survey group, the questionnaire was piloted on six randomly selected undergraduate students from courses not taking part in the main questionnaire. These were recruited via posters located around the campus library advertising for participants (Appendix D) and offered the chance to win the Amazon voucher along with receiving an Easter egg for taking part. Pilot participants were asked to complete the online survey and give feedback on its length, structure, whether the questions were easy to follow and if opportunities were given for the participant to answer as fully as they wanted to. Feedback from all six pilot participants indicated the questionnaire was easy to

⁷⁵ www.surveymonkey.com retrieved 1 July 2014

⁷⁶ R. Gomm, *Social Research Methodology: A Critical Introduction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) p.84

follow and felt the right length. One change was made to question 31, 'Do you think the University Archives and Special Collections are relevant to you?'. This was originally a 'yes' or 'no' closed question, but feedback from two pilot participants asked that a 'maybe' category be included. The questionnaire was structured to reflect the general themes found during the literature review, with sections entitled 'general knowledge', 'use', 'access', 'advertising', 'attitudes' and 'relationships'.

The questionnaire incorporated a mixture of open and closed questions, providing variety for the respondent. Closed questions were used for gathering simple 'yes' and 'no' answers. A Likert scale was used for three questions, including number 19 'are you confident how to access University Archives and Special Collections material?' which provided a five-point scale from very confident to very unsure. Open questions provided the opportunity for participants to provide more detailed information, although they can be difficult to code and analyse as the respondent is able to answer however they wish. Fifteen questions were either open or incorporated an open element, such as 'yes', 'no' and 'other' or 'maybe', giving space for the respondent to expand their answer. Fully open questions such as question 27 'do you have any suggestions on how best to advertise the University Archives and Special Collections to students?' gave scope to provide a wide variety of individual responses.

3.4 Academic Focus Group

Following the undergraduate questionnaire a focus group for academics teaching on the eight sample courses was held on 12 June 2014. This method was chosen as an alternative to a self-completion questionnaire to incorporate a variety of data collection techniques into the study. The focus group provided the opportunity to gather detailed

information on academic perceptions of archives and special collections, and views on undergraduate use of these, in one session. The researcher was also interested in how the participants interacted with each other in a peer to peer situation. Kruger and Casey indicate that focus groups are useful when researching 'multifaceted behaviour' and there is a desire to hear what ideas may be generated by a group discussion⁷⁷. Participants were invited by email to provide their availability over a two-week period via an online Doodle scheduling poll⁷⁸ to ensure maximum participation levels. Refreshments were provided on the day as a small incentive for taking part.

A pilot was carried out by asking two Subject Librarians as colleagues of the researcher to read through the participant consent form (Appendix E) and questions and feedback on whether they were clear and how long they thought each question might take to answer in a focus group situation. Their feedback suggested an explanation of 'barriers' was included in question 3 'what are the barriers preventing undergraduates from using archives and special collections?'. On the day, participants were asked to read and sign the participant consent form. The researcher acted as moderator during the focus group. Nine questions were asked (Appendix F), based upon the research aim and objectives of this study and informed by the literature review themes similar to those adopted for the undergraduate survey question groupings. The questions were open-ended and intended to provoke discussion amongst the group, with non-verbal activity noted by the moderator. Two dictaphones were used to record the discussion to ensure a backup recording was available if one piece of equipment failed. A transcription kit with foot pedal was used to aid the write up of the sound recording in the form of a transcript.

⁷⁷ R. A. Kruger & M. A. Casey, *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2000) p.24

⁷⁸ www.doodle.com retrieved 1 July 2014

3.5 Ethical Issues

A number of ethical issues were considered when designing and conducting the data gathering element of this study. Permission to carry out this research at the University of Gloucestershire was obtained from both the author's Head of Department and Chair of the University of Gloucestershire's Research Committee. A dissertation proposal form was submitted and approved by Aberystwyth University. The study follows the ethical guidelines of The British Sociological Association⁷⁹ and Aberystwyth University's Department of Information Studies (Appendix G). Participants have been protected from harm and any information obtained from them has been freely given. The responses of all participants have been anonymised and kept confidential in accordance with the data protection principles outlines in both ethical statements. All participants were made aware of what would happen to the data they supplied, including its destruction six months after confirmation of the dissertation results. The focus group participant consent form made reference to the author possibly writing about the study in published articles and where the completed dissertation would be held. On reflection, a short statement to this effect should have been included in the undergraduate questionnaire.

No vulnerable groups of participants such as those aged under 18 were included in the study, and participants were not exposed to vulnerable situations. Informed consent factored in both the undergraduate questionnaire and academic focus group, and participants were aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. The objectivity of the author and their potential bias is worth consideration. As this study is workplace-based, the author may have preconceptions about the results of the study. As the University of Gloucestershire is a relatively small institution, the author did

⁷⁹ <http://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/27107/StatementofEthicalPractice.pdf> retrieved 19 July 2014

know some of the academic focus group participants, and potentially some of the undergraduate questionnaire participants. In this case the author has followed advice found in Aberystwyth University's Department of Information Studies statement of ethics.

3.7 Reliability and Validity

Braun and Clarke define reliability as whether the same results could be produced by another researcher conducting the same experiment under the same conditions⁸⁰. They define validity as 'whether a measure accurately captures 'reality'', also stating this can be difficult to achieve in qualitative research as there may be 'multiple realities'⁸¹. By adopting a mixed-methods research design, the reliability and validity of the results should be increased as data was gathered using two methods. According to Creswell and Plano Clark, 'overarching validity' can be achieved this way⁸². External validity and generalizability also feature in this study, as both are concerned with whether the results of a sample population can be applied to a wider population⁸³. In this case, whether the results of the sample students can be applied to the wider undergraduate student population as a whole, as with the views of the sample academics. By incorporating a purposive sample of a wider population into this research design, an attempt has been made to produce statistically valid results. It was hoped the data saturation point, at which no new information is obtained from participants⁸⁴, could be reached in both the undergraduate and academic sample population.

⁸⁰ V. Braun & V. Clarke, *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2013) p.279

⁸¹ *Ibid* p.280

⁸² Creswell & Plano Clark, *Mixed Methods Research* p.146

⁸³ Braun & Clarke, *Successful Qualitative Research* p.280

⁸⁴ R. Kumar, *Research Methodology: a step-by-step guide for beginners* (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2011) p.213

Bryman recommends calculating the response rate by dividing the total number of usable respondents by the total sample population, then multiplying by 100 to achieve a percentage⁸⁵. Of the sample of 745 undergraduates invited to take part in the survey, 50 responses were received making the response rate of the sample population 7%. Of the sample of eight academic tutors invited to take part in the focus group, two took part making the response rate of the sample population 25%. These response rates, especially those of the undergraduate survey, are very low and therefore not statistically valid. They may however be indicative of wider trends and remain worthy of analysis.

3.8 Methods of Data Analysis

Headline results for the undergraduate questionnaire were obtained via the SurveyMonkey analytics tool. Frequency data has then been analysed by the researcher and a percentage of the survey population applied to each question. Open questions have been thematically coded. A content analysis of the academic focus group transcript has been carried out, with the responses manually coded (Appendix H). Each category has been informed by the focus group discussion and literature review themes, and colour-coded for ease of identification. Both datasets have been reported individually in the results chapter but analysed together in the discussion chapter of this study.

3.9 Limitations

Several limitations have been encountered during this study. The 7% response rate of the self-administered undergraduate survey means the results are not statistically valid.

⁸⁵ Bryman, *Social Research Methods* p.181

Although the questionnaire was easy to set up and administer by the researcher, and more convenient in an online rather than postal form for the participant, the self-completion element meant there was little onus on the participant to complete the survey, especially as they were doing this remotely with no contact from the researcher. Bryman quotes Mangione in stating that a response rate below 50% for postal questionnaires is 'not acceptable'⁸⁶, implying this is worse for online questionnaires.

One explanation of the low response rate was the author asking academic tutors to distribute the survey link via email. Some of the academics may not have done so, and out of the eight courses three achieved a zero response rate from students. Removing these courses from the above response rate calculations only produces an 11% overall response rate by the remaining six courses. A reminder email near the closing date for the survey was sent to the academics. It may have been more successful to send this directly to the students, as with the link to the survey itself. Another explanation for the low response rate may be the time of year the survey was administered. The survey ran from 17 March – 7 April 2014, covering the last three weeks of the undergraduate spring term. This was a very busy time for the students who would be preparing for examinations and handing in coursework. Third-year students would have been particularly affected as dissertations were due after the Easter break. In retrospect, the survey may have had a greater response rate had it been administered earlier in the academic year.

Within the undergraduate survey, each question was not set to require a compulsory answer before participants were allowed to progress to the next question. This meant that although 50 participants took part in the survey, not every participant answered every question and this affected response rates for individual questions. Arguably, making each

⁸⁶ T. W. Mangione, 'Mail Surveys: Improving the Quality' (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995) pp.60-61 in Bryman, *Social Research Methods* p.219

section of the questionnaire compulsory takes away participants' right to choose not to answer certain questions. However it does mean that some questions within the survey have higher response rates than others.

The focus group suffered from low participation and only having two participants limited the discussion which could have been generated by a larger group. As Bryman points out, the researcher has less control over a focus group when compared to other data-gathering techniques such as a one-to-one interview. Participants may also have been uncomfortable expressing their personal views amongst people they knew⁸⁷. It is doubtful the focus group discussion reached saturation, and perhaps planning a number of smaller focus groups providing participants with a range of times to choose from may have increased attendance levels. The undergraduate questionnaire may also not have reached saturation due to the small number of participants compared to the total undergraduate population.

3.10 Summary

This methodology chapter has discussed the mixed-methods research approach used for this study, justified the purposive sampling strategy, outlined the data-collection methods used, considered ethical issues and the reliability and validity of the research approach and findings, stated methods of data analysis and reflected on the limitations of the research. The results are presented in the following chapter.

⁸⁷ Bryman, *Social Research Methods* pp.488-489

4. Results

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents the findings of this study. The first section will focus on the demographic of participants, followed by the results of the undergraduate questionnaire and academic focus group. The findings fulfil objective two of this study, to explore student and academic staff perceptions of university archives and special collections. They also contribute towards objective three, identifying motivations and barriers affecting student use of university archives and special collections, and objective four, acting as a best-practice guide for higher education archivists for encouraging greater undergraduate use of collections. Where results are presented in percentage terms, the figure has been rounded up or down to give a whole number. Direct quotations from the participants are displayed in italics.

4.2 Participants

50 undergraduate student surveys were completed out of a sample population of 745, giving an overall response rate of 7%. Figure 2 shows participation by course area. Of the eight courses making up the sample group, no responses were received from undergraduates on the Creative Media, Education Studies or Illustration courses. Of the eight academics invited to take part in the focus group, one history lecturer and one biosciences lecturer did, making the participation rate 25%.

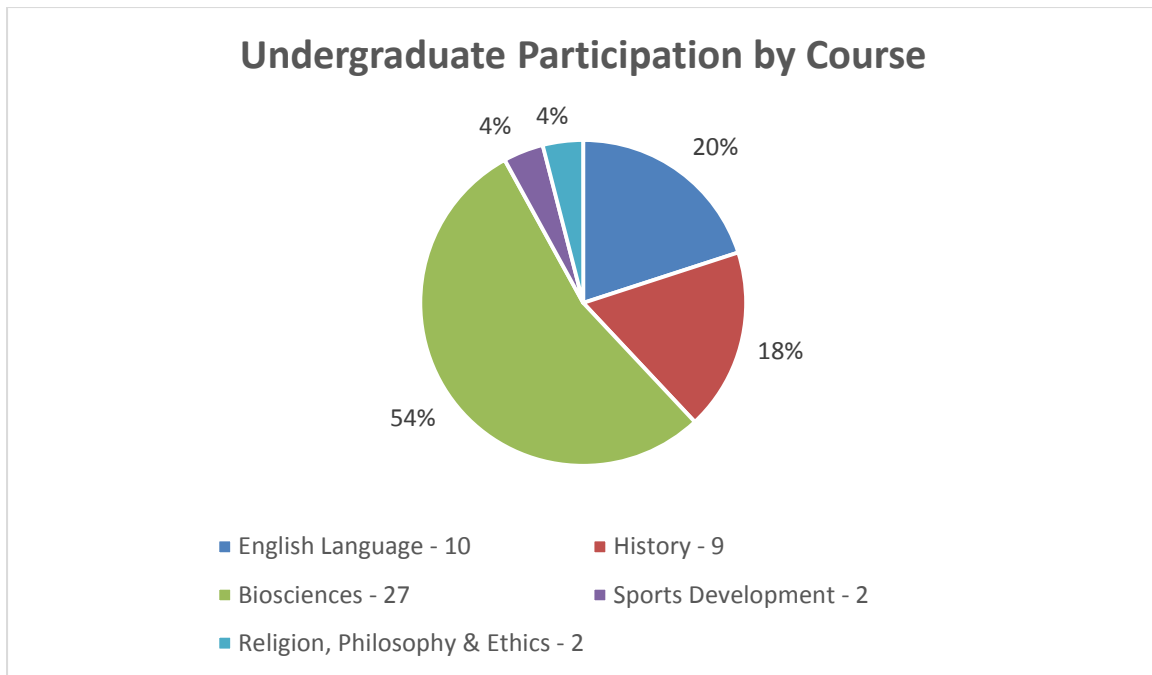


Figure 2: Undergraduate Participation by Course

4.3 Undergraduate Student Survey

Results of the undergraduate student survey are discussed by question grouping, mirroring the structure of the questionnaire.

4.3.1 General Knowledge Questions

31 of 50 respondents (62%) knew the University provides a University Archives and Special Collections service, whereas 19 (38%) did not. When asked what participants thought the University Archive and Special Collections service did, of the 46 respondents 4 (9%) answered in terms of general facilities or physical space, such as *'allow students to use the facilities'*, 9 (20%) did not know, 14 (30%) referred to specific collections, archives or documents such as *'catalogues historical material concerning the University and local history and provides the materials for people conducting research'*. 19 respondents (41%) gave answers of an information-generic or library-based nature, including *'enables students*

to access books/ maps etc. which are not available in the main library'. 31 out of 50 respondents (62%) knew students can use the service for research whereas 19 (38%) did not.

Summaries of the percentage of students who had heard of each of the five main collections held by the service are presented in figure 3.

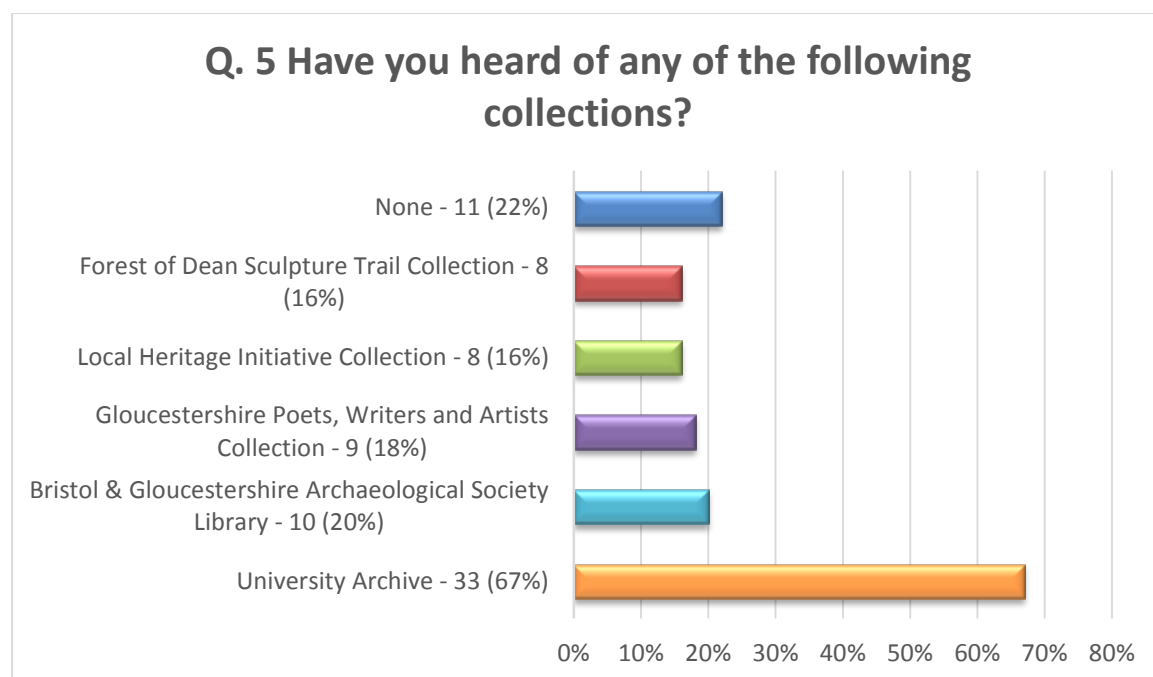


Figure 3: Percentage of 49 respondents who have heard of each collection held by the University Archives and Special Collections service

27 of 50 respondents (54%) knew where the University Archives and Special Collections service is located, compared with 29 (58%) who had used the Social Learning Zone, the room in which the service is based. When asked if respondents knew the difference between an archive and a library, 23 of 48 respondents (48%) answered with a straightforward 'no' and 7 (15%) with a 'yes' without elaboration. 2 respondents (4%) defined the difference in terms of physical location, 11 (23%) stated the difference was book or reference-only based, and 5 respondents (10%) cited primary and secondary source

materials as the main difference. Only eight of the 50 participants (16%) said they knew how archive material is organised and catalogued. 40 of 49 respondents (82%) did not know what a 'finding aid' is, and 4 (8%) of those who answered thought it was a staff member.

4.3.2 Usage Questions

15 of the 50 respondents (30%) said they had used the University Archives and Special Collections, and of these 100% had done so because of coursework. 3 of 14 respondents (21%) who had used the service also stated they had done so due to personal interest.

Figure 4 shows a word cloud⁸⁸ with responses to what those who had used the service thought of the facilities such as ease of access, helpfulness of staff and surroundings.

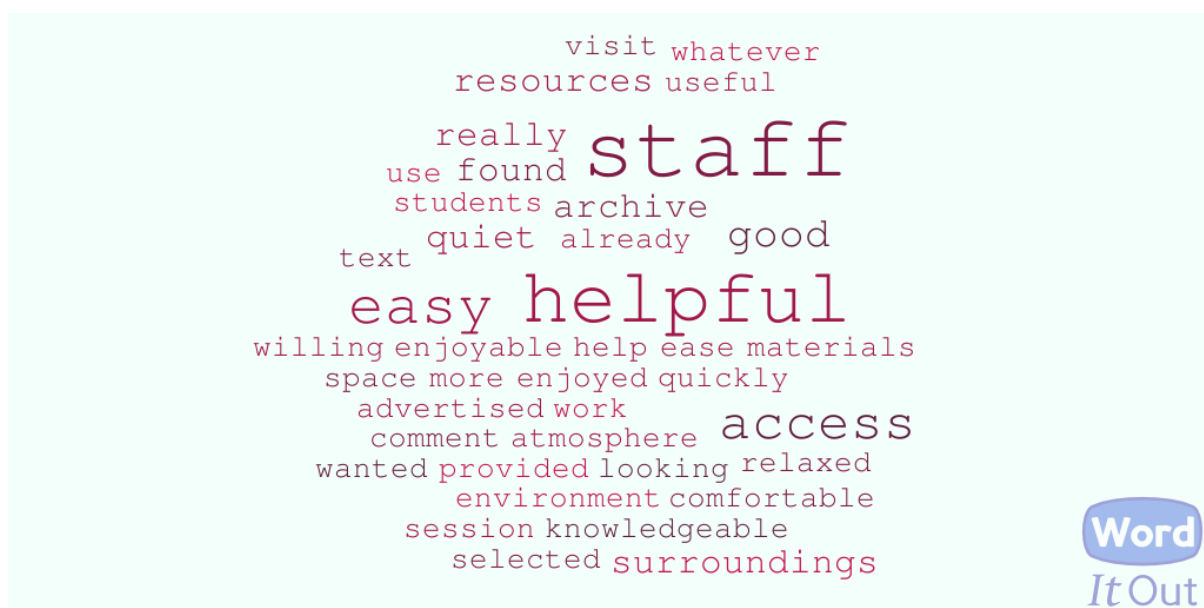


Figure 4: Word cloud showing most common responses when 15 respondents were asked what they thought of the University Archives and Special Collections facilities (question 13)

15 out of 50 respondents (30%) had attended a teaching session in the archives and special collections, and of these 8 (53%) made a return visit after their session. When asked how

⁸⁸ Generated via www.worditout.com. Retrieved 18 August 2014

satisfied they were with their teaching session on a Likert scale of 1 being 'very unsatisfied' and 5 being 'very satisfied', 9 respondents (60%) answered they were 4 'satisfied'. 3 respondents (20%) said they were 'neither satisfied or unsatisfied', whilst 3 respondents (20%) stated they were 'very satisfied'. Nobody said they were either 'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied' with their teaching session. Table 1 details what respondents felt were the best and worst things about the teaching sessions.

What was the best thing about the teaching session? 13 responses
The material itself – 8 (62%)
Generally interesting/ useful – 4 (30%)
Staff knowledge – 1 (8%)
What was the worst thing about the teaching session? 9 responses
Facilities/ teaching space inadequate – 4 (34%)
Timescale too long or short – 3 (34%)
Could be more informative – 2 (22%)

Table 1: Responses for best and worst aspects of archive teaching sessions

Figure 5 details how confident all respondents were to access University Archives and Special Collections material.

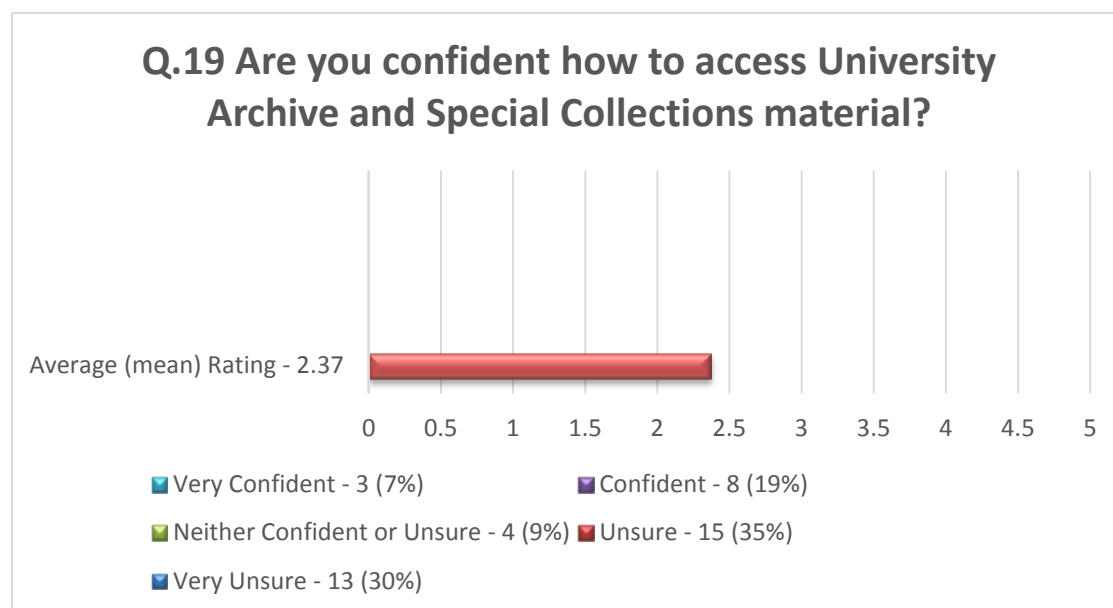


Figure 5: Likert scale showing confidence levels of 43 respondents on how to access University Archives and Special Collections material

4.3.3 Access Questions

31 of 47 respondents (66%) felt the introduction of evening or weekend opening hours would encourage them to use the service. A comprehensive 100% of 48 respondents said they would be more inclined to use the service if an online searchable catalogue was introduced. 47 of 48 respondents (98%) would be more inclined to use the collections if they were digitised and available to view online such as photographic material. 44 of 48 respondents (92%) would consider using an online tutorial or video on how to use archives, with one including a comment *'I might but I think I would find staff help more useful'*.

4.3.4 Advertising Questions

Only 4 of 48 respondents (8%) had used the service website, with nobody having viewed the service blog and 44 (92%) having used neither the website nor blog. Figure 6 shows response rates to whether the participants had seen any posts about the service on the Student News webpage, Library News webpage or University of Gloucestershire Libraries Facebook page.

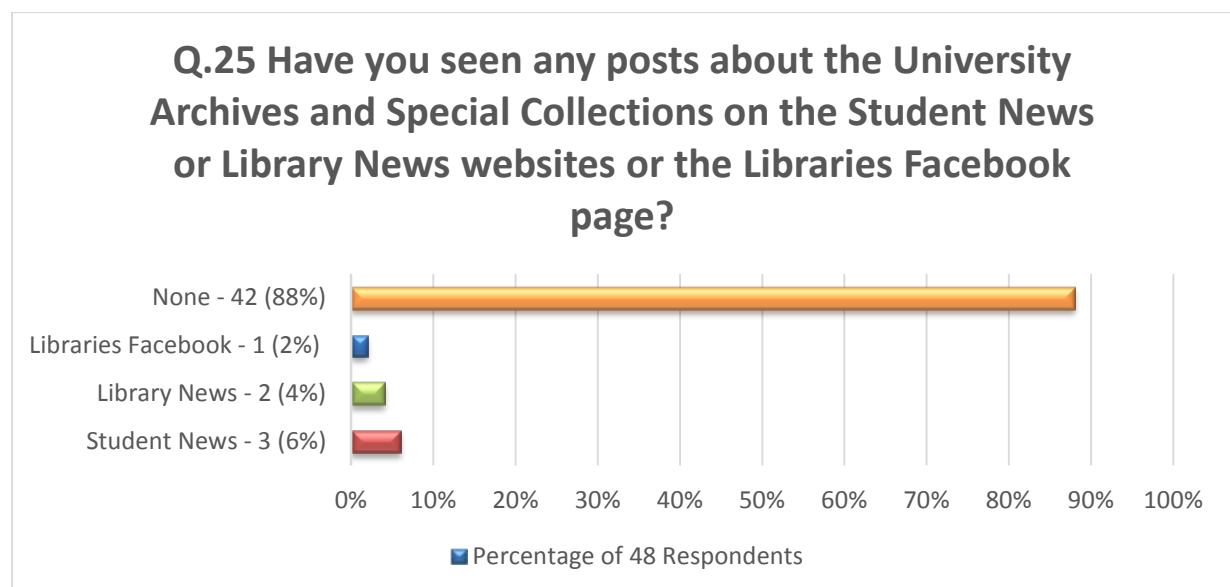


Figure 6: Posts viewed about the service on the Student News webpage, Library News webpage and University of Gloucestershire Libraries Facebook page

20 of 48 respondents (42%) had seen physical displays of archive and special collections material either in the exhibition area at Francis Close Hall campus or in the Social Learning Zone where the service is based. Figure 7 shows suggestions for how best to advertise the service to students.

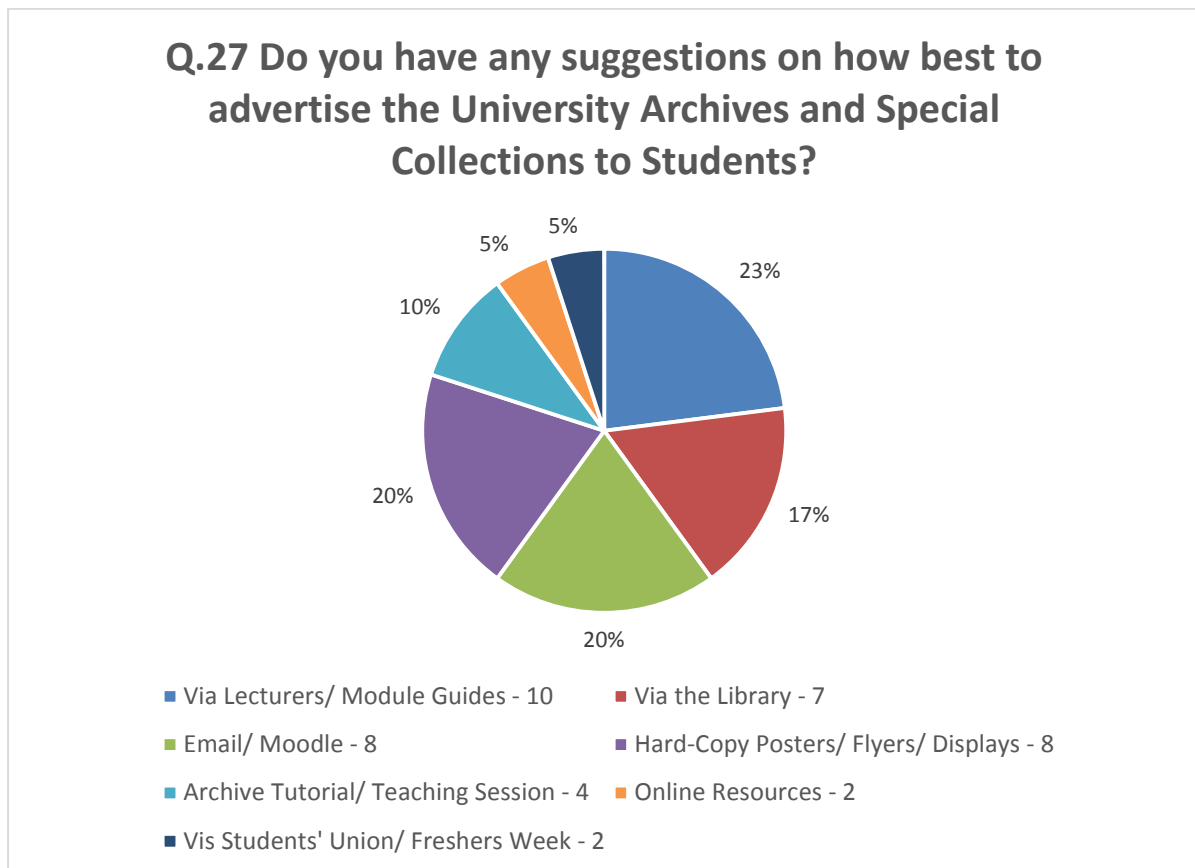


Figure 7: 32 responses for question 27 'do you have any suggestions on how best to advertise University Archives and Special Collections to students?'

4.3.5 Attitudes Questions

Table 2 shows responses to the question 'please describe "archives and special collections" in one word'. The most common responses were 'useful' (18%), 'interesting' (18%), 'old' (15%) and 'historic' or 'history' (12%).

Respondent	Responses
1	Accessible
2	Useful
3	Preservation
4	History
5	Useful
6	Old books for research
7	Useful
8	Useful
9	Interesting
10	Previous
11	Old
12	Historical
13	Useful
14	Old
15	Old
16	Old
17	Interesting
18	Repository
19	Interesting
20	Historical
21	Resources
22	Unused
23	Interesting
24	Useful
25	Materials you can't find in the university library
26	Interesting
27	Postgraduate
28	Fascinating
29	Unknown
30	Unknown
31	Interesting
32	Historic
33	Old

Table 2: 33 Responses to question 'please describe "archives and special collections" in one word'

33 of 39 respondents (89%) answered firmly 'yes' that it is important for the University to keep archives and special collections, with comments including *'as a university it is our responsibility to hold and collect records and information which may otherwise be lost', 'I feel showing history of the area where you are studying makes a personal connection to*

where you are' and 'archives form a key part of accessing local history and heritage. This service is invaluable to students and the local community'. One respondent replied they 'didn't know', there were three unsure yeses and one maybe. Could be in the local museum?'. One participant thought 'less so if they were online'.

Figure 8 shows a Likert scale of responses to the question 'how easy do you think it is to use archive material'.

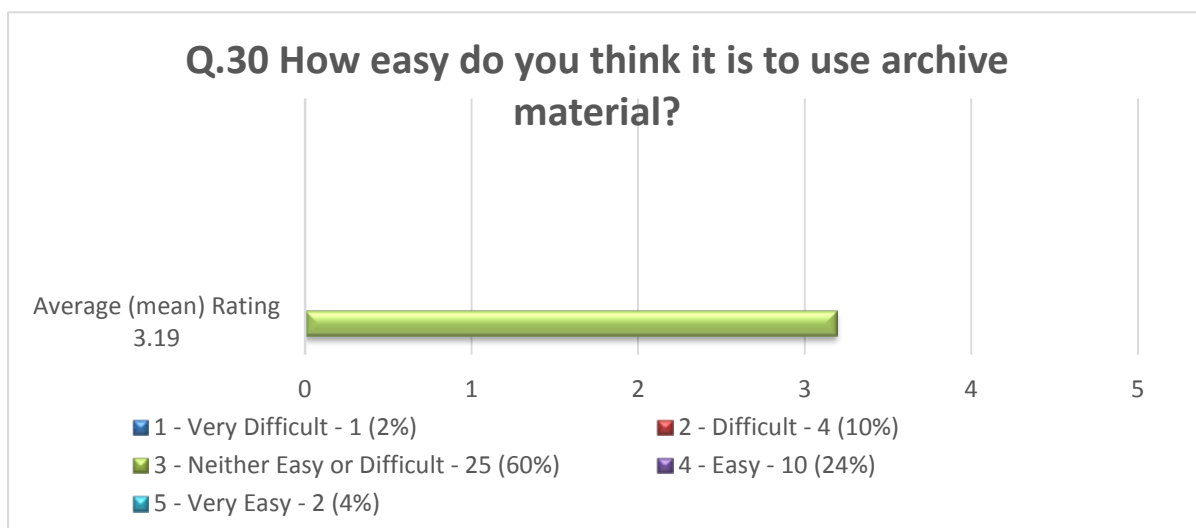


Figure 8: Likert scale showing 42 responses to question 30 'how easy do you think it is to use archive material?'

23 of 46 respondents (50%) said the University Archives and Special Collections were relevant to them, with 8 (17%) answering no. 15 (33%) thought the service might be relevant, with the main reason for this response being they needed to know more about the material held by the service to judge whether it was relevant to them (13 respondents). Two respondents felt the service was not relevant to their course but they would like to know more about the history of the University. Figure 9 shows responses to how the service could be made more relevant to students.

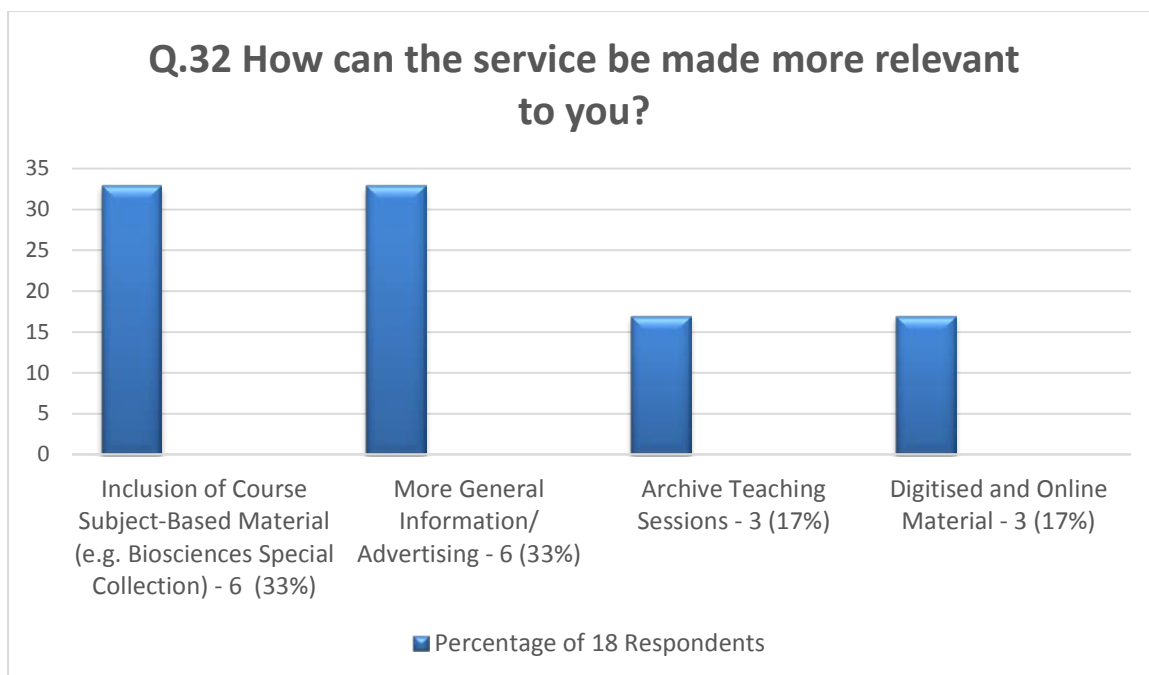


Figure 9: Responses to question 32 'how can the service be made more relevant to you?'

Only 4 of 45 respondents (9%) knew students could deposit their own work into the University Archive as part of documenting today's student experience. 39 of 45 respondents (87%) wanted to find out more about the service and 23 of 44 respondents (52%) were interested in a student internship in the repository.

4.3.6 Relationships Questions

38 of 45 respondents (85%) did not know who the University Archives and Special Collections staff were, and 5 of 44 respondents (11%) would not feel able to ask staff for help. Table 3 shows answers for whether students knew how to contact the service.

Category of Response	Number of Responses out of 43
Straightforward “No”	23 (53%)
Visit in person	8 (19%)
Straightforward “Yes”	4 (9%)
Email	4 (9%)
Telephone	2 (5%)
Find contact details via library webpage	1 (2.5%)
Book an appointment	1 (2.5%)

Table 3: Responses to question 38 “do you know how to contact the service?”

13 of 44 respondents (30%) said their Subject Librarian had mentioned the service, with 70% saying they had not. 20 of 45 respondents (44%) said their academic tutors had mentioned the service, with 25 (56%) stating their tutors had not. Participants were invited to add any final comments at the end of the survey. Two were received.

I have only found out about these archives from participating in this survey. They need to be promoted more in terms of general information but also course specific information as well as making it easy to access to all students (response 1)

I like the re-design very hip (response 2, in reference to the refurbished Social Learning Zone)

4.4 Academic Focus Group

The example section of the coded academic focus group transcript is available in Appendix H. The coding schedule consists of 8 key areas, and the results of each are summarised below.

4.4.1 Attitudes to Archives and Special Collections

The focus group discussed attitudes of both students and academics towards archives and special collections. There was consensus that students were not motivated to use archives and special collections through self-motivation, but rather through academics and teaching sessions. One participant commented on the lack of previous knowledge students had about archives:

The way that they're taught at school and A-level doesn't set them up for the idea of using an archive you know their kind of the documents are given to them, facsimiles usually, obviously (Participant 1)

Another participant highlighted a

Mis-alignment or the absence of an alignment... between what they are studying, what they are interested in, and either what is held or what they perceive to be held which may or may not be the same thing. Erm, so it's not so much a barrier to them using it, it's a non-stimulus to them using it if you like (Participant 2)

When discussing attitudes towards rules and regulations within the archive setting, Participant 1 described the job of the archivist as 'essentially preservation', and their own view of 'worship[ing] the text' as an historian, making the 'regulatory' environment of the service necessary. Participant 2 spoke of the importance of explaining rules and regulations, framing them as 'more of a request than an instruction' as a means to aiding student

understanding and acceptance rather than alienating them. The participant likened it to the rules and regulations found in the Biosciences laboratories:

We have very similar thing with the lab we don't allow people to eat or drink in the lab again for obvious reasons, and as soon as you say we've got chemicals in here that react with water, we don't want to put you at risk, they're fine with that
(Participant 2)

When discussing the perceived role of the archivist as teacher, Participant 1 stated '*an archivist's first priority, probably first, second and last priority is the archive*'. The participant went on to say:

The role of the archivist is to look after the archive you know to to to be the guardian of the archive then to erm you know make it accessible. The role of the lecturer or the teacher is to facilitate student learning (Participant 1)

When discussing the academic literature available on the nature of archives and the lack of formal training on being an educator as part of archive qualifications, Participant 1 went on to say '*whilst your skills as archivists have been hugely updated in recent years perhaps the principle of what it is to be an archivist hasn't moved with it in many respects*'.

4.4.2 Subject-Specific Collections and Research

When asked what the term 'archives and special collections' meant to the participants, both answered in terms of their academic disciplines:

Well, you know, as a historian [laughs] they mean everything don't they really. They mean the tools of my trade essentially (Participant 1)

For me as a Biologist probably not as much as they should... I would be interested in looking at old natural history records, something like that, something that is directly relevant to my discipline (Participant 2)

Both participants thought it was important to have subject-related collections in order to increase student and academic use of the service (*'the key thing is to be course-relevant' – Participant 2*). This was seen as being relevant as an undergraduate teaching resource or for more specialist research such as the undergraduate dissertation.

4.4.3 Physical Access and Use

When discussing physical access and use of archive material, Participant 2 conceded that they had *'come into the archives area but I've never really used it other than to go through an old thesis that was on microfiche about eight years ago'*. Participant 1 recommended the service have a *'much greater involvement in induction week'* as a means to improving promotion of the service to students and getting them to visit. Both participants acknowledged the physical demands on original archive material:

If you were em had a group of say 30 students all trying to access one original document, well the archivist is going to have a heart attack because the document's going to get trashed if you're not careful erm, and also erm you know 30 students with the best will in the world a large percentage of them will arrive at the same time
(Participant 1)

There were mixed views on whether putting material online would encourage students to visit the service in person. Participant 1 felt that making documents available online '*doesn't drive [students] into the archive I'm afraid*', whereas Participant 2 said '*I don't think it would be a case of one or the other, you might actually find that having a digital repository actually encourages people to come in and look at the original*'.

4.4.4 Digital Access and Use

Much of the focus group discussion centred on digital access and use of archive and special collections material, more so through a medium such as Moodle for access to course-related material than a designated archive catalogue, although there was a feeling that doing this may prevent students from '*self-discovering*' (Participant 2) other material. Despite this, both participants were very positive about the concept of having a dedicated archives and special collections area or '*portal*' (Participant 1) on Moodle or even making use of the University's online Research Repository. Participants discussed the benefits of Moodle, including the fact students are already familiar with how it works, although Participant 2 suggested linking between Moodle sites may be '*more challenging*' with Participant 1 replying '*yeah that's true [laughter] don't know anything about the technology*'. Another benefit which was discussed was the 24/7 nature of online access:

With an awful lot of them having part-time jobs and full-time study they can or they would in that case be able to go to an online repository at 2 o'clock in the morning, which obviously they couldn't come to a physical repository at 2 o'clock in the morning (Participant 2)

The participants went further and considered the benefits of a dedicated online archives and special collections teaching module, also delivered using Moodle.

When discussing the lack of an online archive catalogue, Participant 1 stated:

I don't think I see it as of much of a barrier as you do really, because I go back to my first point really in that most of student engagement with the archive is through modules and it's through assessments and it's through erm activities that we direct them to. So you've kind of gone round the catalogue problem then by doing that. Catalogue problem becomes the big barrier when you've got people from outside coming in... but also for students wanting to simply find out what's there... but I suspect there's very [emphasised] few students who simply want to find out what's there

The participant did acknowledge how online archive catalogues can dramatically improve access to material, *'all of a sudden there's material being uncovered that you never knew, you would never have found with the old card-based or paper-based erm, search materials. So it has revolutionised the way we do things and you know I suspect that will only increase'* (Participant 1).

When discussing a lack of student interaction via the service website or blog, Participant 1 noted *'we need to be more joined up in our kind of addressing the students through digital means'*, such as linking the archives and special collections blog to the history course blog. Participant 2 discussed a potentially innovative approach to documenting the current student experience by capturing student tweets and video diaries from field trips, stating *'that's actually how a lot of students live anyway you know in the moment. It never occurred to me... that it would be of any interest to archives'*.

4.4.5 Relationships with Academics

Participant 1 talked of the *'aspiration'* to work as closely with the service as possible, and acknowledged that students probably wouldn't visit if academics *'didn't say "you have to go and complete this project"'*. When discussing this role further Participant 1 went on to say:

We're facilitators aren't we, you know and facilitators and kind of liaison officers between you the archivist, the archive and our students and that's that's our job you know, erm but alongside that I think where in this particular archive we've been quite negligent in the past... there's opportunities here (Participant 1)

The group also discussed the difficulty of embedding archival research in established modules such as the humanities research module offered to all humanities students, which is overseen by one academic and therefore *'driven by [individual] staff interest'* (Participant 2). The group also discussed the time pressures on both academic and archive staff when trying to encourage academics to include archive material in their teaching, being *'very*

hard, very hard to do given the insane demands on our time' (Participant 1). Participant 2 thought it was important the archive staff had a good understanding of course content for them to help academic staff match appropriate material from the service to courses.

4.4.6 Facilities and Physical Space

The participants had mixed feelings about the physical space the service is located in. Although they personally liked the room, Participant 1 felt the wooden panelling was *'intimidating for I would imagine you know kind of people who are not used to coming into places like this'*. They felt the new décor of the Social Learning Zone was *'not welcoming décor'* (Participant 2) and said the following about the entrance to the room:

They have to enter through a tunnel [points to entrance door bordered by a wood-panelled wall and block of archive stacks] which also has security you know kind of devices as you go in. None of it is 'come in and have a wander' is it? (Participant 1)

The participants felt the intimidating nature of the room was a barrier to undergraduate use of the service.

4.4.7 Library v. Archive Resources and Skills

There was some confusion between the nature of primary source archive material as opposed to published literature, although searching for journal articles was likened to searching for archive and special collections material:

We don't use the archive but we do very much work from primary literature in terms of journal articles... we expect them [students] to do that from what we would refer to as 'primary academic literature' so journal articles and we do get them to search those out themselves and go to the Library (Participant 2)

Participant 1 stated that students knew archives and special collections are '*different to the library*' partly because the service is physically separated from the main library. The participant also touched upon the difference between library and archive material and advocated using subject librarians to engage undergraduates as '*they're probably charged with doing it in a much more pro-active way than yourself and the archive service, they've got better at debunking*'. When discussing the lack of student knowledge about how archive material is arranged and catalogued, Participant 1 said:

I'm not sure they would say they knew the library cataloguing either they just go online, get the number... you know and find it and now of course we're back to your inadequacy of not having a proper catalogue

4.4.8 Teaching and Student Interaction

Much of the discussion focused on student interaction via archive teaching sessions, which the participants saw as the main reason undergraduates used archives and special collections. Participants discussed the possibility of seminar sessions built around a particular document or special collections text. Participant 1 noted a '*major disjuncture*' between modules currently offered by the University and the material held by the service. The participants saw this as a barrier to embedding within undergraduate courses. It was

felt that if material could be incorporated into teaching, doing this with first-year modules would be most beneficial to the student as they would be aware of the service and material early in their course. An alternative would be '*a stand-alone independent module*' (Participant 1) purely focused on archive and special collections material which would train undergraduates on handling, researching, organising and cataloguing. It was felt the possibility of such a module becoming reality was constrained by time and finding space within the current curriculum framework, '*the debate about which module we would cut to facilitate that would be a tough one*' (Participant 1).

The participants did moot the idea of '*small spin-off projects*' (Participant 2) using archive and special collections material in an extra-curricular setting that:

You would like to hope that erm students would be interested in doing so not necessarily erm you know kind of depositing material or even writing something because that just feels like work, but perhaps something like erm a digital story or something like erm a video diary... perhaps getting a club involved a society involved and recording their year-long experience

The participants also felt this would be an '*innovative*' (Participant 2) way to collect new material for the University Archive.

4.5 Summary

This chapter has outlined the results of the undergraduate student survey and academic focus group as part of the data gathering element of this study. Although participation levels for both may not have produced statistically relevant results, the data

does provide interesting insights into undergraduate and academic perceptions of university archives and special collections. A discussion of these results, with reference to the literature review, follows in the next chapter.

5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will analyse the results of this study in the context of the literature review to fulfil objective three, identifying motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archives and special collections, and objective four, to act as a best-practice guide for higher education archivists in encouraging greater undergraduate use of collections. Results of both the undergraduate survey and academic focus group will be analysed simultaneously. The chapter will consider what the motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of archives and special collections are, and conclude with a summary of the key points with reference to any unexpected outcomes.

5.2 General Understanding of Archives and Special Collections

Only 31 of 50 respondents to the undergraduate questionnaire (62%) knew the University provided an archives and special collections service that students could use for research purposes. This highlights the presumption in much of the literature that undergraduates are already engaged with such services, when in this case many students did not know the service exists. 19 of 50 respondents (41%) described the service in generic information, library or journal terms, suggesting a confusion with library provision. Nearly half of respondents did not know the difference between a library and an archive. This is strengthened by the results of the academic focus group, with one participant describing '*primary literature*' in terms of journal articles rather than original documents or special collection secondary-source material. However it should be remembered that only two academics took part in the focus group. Perhaps unsurprisingly, general understanding was

higher amongst students who had previously used the service, and those from humanities subjects such as History, than courses that had not engaged nor had a traditional fit with archives such as Biosciences. This also applies to academic staff perceptions. More should be done to promote the basic existence and purpose of the service to undergraduates and academics alike, which is a primary barrier to undergraduate engagement.

Responses to whether students knew how archive material is organised and catalogued, or what a 'finding aid' is were very low, suggesting the 'archival intelligence' of participants as described by Yakel and Torres was also very low. Despite this, 85% of respondents answered firmly that it was important for the University to keep archives and special collections. This suggests an underlying acknowledgement that undergraduates realise the value and worth of the service, although they may not understand why this is, which is bolstered by 87% of undergraduate respondents wanting to find out more about the service. Participants of the academic focus group were generally positive about the service, although acknowledged the perceived '*mis-alignment*' between what students are studying and what is held or perceived to be held by the service. This suggests that working firstly with the academics as the key student contact to increase their understanding through academic induction sessions as advocated by Zhou is a positive step in increasing the general understanding of their students.

5.3 Relationships

The academic focus group highlighted the concern from academics of time pressures both on themselves and archive staff when it comes to developing a working relationship and establishing collaborative teaching. This confirms the research by Peter Wosh and colleagues highlighting the pitfalls of poor communication between the service and

academics. When the group discussed the concept of the archivist as teacher as advocated by Krause and Stam, it was met with little real enthusiasm, with a participant describing the role of the archivist as looking after the archive and the role of the academic as both to teach and liaise between the student and the service. This is not to say the participant does not value the role of the service, but was concerned with time pressures and where acknowledgement of such teaching activity could fit in the existing curriculum. To develop this concept further a commitment from both archive staff and academic department would be needed, with time and resources allocated as part of the curriculum, which was welcomed as a concept by academic participants.

When the undergraduate participants were asked whether their academic tutor had mentioned the service, 20 of 45 respondents (44%) said they had. Increasing this percentage would raise undergraduate knowledge of the service. When asked if their Subject Librarian had mentioned the service, only 13 of 44 respondents (30%) said they had. This suggests a greater interaction between the service and subject librarians is needed, as advocated by Yakel. The understanding of the role of the library amongst the respondents was greater than their understanding of the role of the archives and special collections, suggesting the archive service may benefit by adopting the outreach techniques used by librarians which have seemingly proved successful. The concept of the 'embedded librarian' discussed by both Seals and Mulder and Jones may prove a successful technique by mirroring the librarians' interaction with undergraduates. Attending course boards alongside librarians may also be beneficial.

38 out of 45 student respondents (85%) did not know who archive staff were and 23 of 43 respondents (53%) did not know how to contact the service, although 39 out of 44 respondents (89%) said they would feel comfortable asking archive staff for help. This

suggests a barrier in the form of a lack of general information about the service, rather than the reluctance to interact with it as suggested by Greg Johnson's concept of 'archival anxiety'. The academic focus group corroborated this view, believing that if rules about food or handling were explained rather than dictated there is little scope for anxiety about them.

Of the 15 undergraduate respondents who had used the service, 100% had done so due to coursework requirements, with 21% of these also visiting out of personal interest. This shows the fundamental impact archive and academic collaboration has on student motivation for using the service. 41 of 45 respondents (91%) did not realise that material produced by current students could be accessioned into the University Archive, and promotion of this may increase student motivation to interact with the service. The academic focus group participants thought extra-curricular student-archive interaction may attract a small number of students each year, although module-based interaction would still remain the prime motivator for undergraduates. Examples in the literature review of students generating new material as equal learning partners rather than strictly 'users' of the archives at the universities of Illinois and Oregon are both part of an assessed module. Archivists need to understand what is relevant to students and ensure the service is offering them what they need in terms of coursework and personal interest. Services in a university setting face the challenge of engaging undergraduates whose turnover is constant, each autumn faced with new recruits who on average stay only for three years. The relationship the service must build with students has therefore to be swiftly attained, focused and meaningful. Undergraduate 'ownership' of archive projects could be a beneficial motivating reason to use the service.

5.4 Access and Promotion

Promotion of the existence of the service and general information need to be increased. 44 of 48 undergraduate respondents (92%) had used neither the service website nor blog, and very few had seen information about the service on either the University's Student News website, Library News page or libraries Facebook page. It would seem that all web-based promotion outlets need to be reviewed and promoted to students through their academic tutors as they are not discovering these via the archive service, libraries or self-discovery. The academic focus group participants were keen to promote the service blog on individual course blogs.

20 of 48 undergraduate respondents (42%) had seen a physical display of archive and special collections material, either in the Social Learning Zone where the service is based or in the dedicated archive exhibition cabinets outside the main lecture theatre on campus. This suggests physical displays are located in adequate areas for increased viewing by students, but perhaps they should show more basic information about the service, how to contact it and what it does alongside each display. Deirdre Stam's uncertainty regarding the impact of physical exhibitions seems to be brought into question when more students in this study had seen them when compared to those who had visited the service website. Undergraduate respondents stated the best ways to advertise the service was via academics and module guides (23%), followed closely by hard-copy posters, flyers and displays (20%) or email and virtual learning environments such as Moodle (20%). All outreach efforts should be part of an overarching scheme to increase awareness that the service is there and to change perceptions as to what the service actually provides.

The academic focus group participants were not positive about the physical space in which the service is located, believing the décor and entrance passage were in themselves

intimidating. Undergraduate responses to the physical surroundings were much more positive, with comments in favour of the comfortable surroundings, relaxed atmosphere and new décor. Negative student feedback came from respondents who had participated in teaching sessions, stating the room was small and awkward for working in a large group. This suggests Bahde's recommendations for taking teaching sessions out of the archive space and into designated teaching classrooms may make it easier for larger groups to work with archive material, although her reasoning that it can reduce archival anxiety may be unfounded in this instance where students do not find the space intimidating.

100% of 48 undergraduate respondents said they would be more inclined to use the service if they could search collections online, with 98% saying they would if material such as photographs were digitised and available online. By implementing an online catalogue, this would remove a fundamental barrier to student interaction, although the main motivation to use archives and special collections remains coursework-based rather than through personal interest. Academic participants had mixed responses as to whether the lack of an online catalogue was a major barrier, as student interaction with the service was mainly through structured teaching sessions. The lack of 'archival intelligence' displayed by undergraduate respondents mirrors Duff and Cherry's concerns that digital archives can be detrimental to the in-person relationship between user and archivist. However, if undergraduates had the opportunity to learn how to navigate and discover material through online provision, this would increase their 'archival intelligence' and therefore meaningful use of the service. 28 of 43 undergraduate respondents (65%) were either 'unsure' or 'very unsure' how to access archive and special collections material. Zhou's research on the importance of basic orientations sessions, where users could be directed to one access

portal in the form of an online catalogue, suggests that through this method this figure could be reduced.

5.5 Teaching and Skills

15 of 50 undergraduate respondents (30%) had participated in an archive teaching session. This figure could be increased by archive staff focusing efforts on expanding the number of teaching sessions to more courses, which in turn would increase undergraduate use of the service. 47% of these students made a return visit to the service, suggesting they had engaged and were motivated to use archive and special collections material for their coursework. It is important to note the compulsory nature of coursework rather than visiting purely due to personal interest, although 3 of 14 respondents (21%) stated this was also a motivation for using the service. Satisfaction levels for the teaching sessions were good.

44 out of 48 undergraduate respondents (92%) said they would consider using an online tutorial or video on how to use archives, with one respondent saying they might but found staff interaction more helpful. Yakel's research on the continuing role of the archivist in the student experience of using archives and special collections highlights that different students have different needs. Whereas most students would consider using an online archives tutorial, others value the face-to-face interactions with archive staff. One should not be used to substitute the other, but rather should be used in conjunction, especially if archive staff time is constrained. The emphasis Robyns places on the role of the archivist in developing critical thinking skills should not be underestimated.

The academic participants were keen on the concept of a stand-alone module using archive and special collections material, and also making such material available via Moodle

as part of existing modules. They also saw an opportunity to increase motivation to use the service as part of their teaching by acquiring more subject-specific collections and course-relevant material. There was an understanding that making more material available online would reduce wear and tear on the originals, and a feeling online course-content may increase student use of the service, particularly as material would be available 24/7. The discussion generated new ideas of working together, such as the accession of video diaries and Twitter output from student field trips, that would give students the opportunity to interact with the service in a way that was not directly linked to coursework. The key barrier felt by the academic participants was a lack of time to work collaboratively or within the current curriculum framework in terms of a stand-alone archive skills module.

5.7 Summary

This chapter has discussed the results of this study with reference to the literature review. It contributes to the fulfilment of objective three, identifying motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archives and special collections, and objective four, to act as a best-practice guide for higher education archivists in encouraging greater undergraduate use of collections.

Although there were no major unexpected outcomes, the low level of general understanding some undergraduates had of the service, and confusion with library provision, is notable. A large body of the literature presumes students are already engaged with university archive and special collections services when this study shows many do not know they exist, or know the basic workings of such a service. The low level of undergraduate use of the service website and blog, alongside very few having seen posts about the service on social media, was surprising. However, the overwhelming student

response that it was important to keep archives and special collections, along with a large desire to find out more about the service, was a welcome finding. The academic focus group was a largely positive experience that highlighted the key role academics play in the relationship between undergraduate and archive service. This is in terms of both disseminating information about the service and embedding archive and special collections material into course provision, which overall is the main motivating factor for undergraduate use of archives and special collections.

The following chapter will conclude this study and offer suggestions for further research.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will conclude the study by summarising each preceding chapter and considering whether the aims and objectives have been met. This forms objective 5 of the study, together with suggesting the direction of further research.

6.2 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study was to investigate undergraduate use of university archives and special collections with a view to increasing usage by this group of students. This was supported by the research question what are the motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archives and special collections? The objectives to achieve the aim were:

1. To review current practice in the sector
2. To explore undergraduate and academic staff perceptions of university archives and special collections
3. To identify the motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archives and special collections
4. To act as a best-practice guide for higher education archivists in encouraging greater undergraduate use of collections
5. To draw conclusions and suggest how the study could be extended in future

6.3 Literature Review Summary

The literature review contributed to the first and third objective of the study, to review current practice in the sector and identify motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archives and special collections. The main themes emerging from the literature centred on relationships between the archive service and academics, librarians and the students themselves, issues surrounding access to and promotion of the archives and special collections service, and archive teaching sessions and associated skills. The literature showed there can be many motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archive services, although many examples presumed the student population were already aware of and engaging with such services, or that services were providing online catalogues. These were identified as the main gaps in current research, and this study centred on undergraduates who both had and had not engaged with the service through teaching sessions. The literature displayed many proactive approaches to increasing undergraduate use of archives and special collections, the majority of which involved embedding such material into module teaching and forging close working relationships with both librarians and academics.

6.4 Methodology Summary

The methodology of this study attempts to meet both objective 2, exploring undergraduate and academic staff perceptions, and objective 3, identifying motivations and barriers affecting undergraduate use of university archives and special collections. A mixed-methods approach was adopted. Undergraduate students from four courses having had interaction with the service were surveyed via an online questionnaire along with four courses who had no previous formal interaction. This was to ensure a mix of responses from

both types of undergraduate. Academic tutors from these courses were invited to attend a focus group to discuss their views on undergraduate use of archives and special collections as key figures and motivators in the relationship between service and student. Participation figures for both were very low, making the resulting data not statistically valid. However, the data is still worthy of consideration as it offers interesting insights into the views of both sample populations. It is unlikely that saturation levels for either data set were reached, meaning further investigation would help to fully meet both objectives. With hindsight, the author should have run both the undergraduate survey and academic focus group earlier in the academic year to increase participation levels. Although the mixed-methods technique helped the author cross-examine responses from both the survey and focus group, using two techniques generated much data to be analysed.

6.5 Results and Discussion Summary

The results and discussion chapters contributed to objectives 2 and 3 outlined above, along with objective 4, to act as a best-practice guide for higher education archivists in encouraging greater undergraduate use of collections. The results of the undergraduate student survey confirm the identified gap in current literature in that large numbers of the student population are unaware of the existence of the service and therefore are not already using it. There was confusion between what an archive service does and what a library service does, and very low levels of 'archive intelligence'. This in the main is attributable to the lack of an online archive catalogue, resulting in staff having to search and retrieve material rather than the student doing this themselves. The lack of interaction with the service via websites and social media was surprising, suggesting these need to be promoted to students in a different way such as directly through course tutors. One of the

more positive findings was that those students who had engaged in a teaching session as part of their course were satisfied with the session, and many made a return visit to the service. All respondents said they would be more inclined to use the service if there was an online catalogue, and many would if material was digitised and available online, along with an archive skills tutorial. A large number of respondents believed it is important for the University to keep archives and special collections, even though they may not know exactly why.

The findings of the academic focus group generally tallied with the results of the student survey, although whereas the undergraduates liked the physical environment of the service the academics did not. Participants agreed with the student response that the service should be promoted more through academics and online virtual learning environments such as Moodle. Participants discussed the possibility of a stand-alone archive skills module but acknowledged time pressures and the current curriculum structure would make this difficult in reality. The participants were generally positive about the existence of the service and there was a desire to further embed material into current teaching, along with exploring new projects such as archiving student video diaries and Twitter feeds. The focus group participants did not feel the lack of an online catalogue as acutely, as most interaction was already through established archive teaching sessions the students were being directed to the material they needed for that particular module.

6.6 Suggestions for Further Research

The multi-faceted nature of undergraduate motivations and barriers for using university archives and special collections has been displayed through the literature review and survey results. The author believes the aim and objectives have been met to a point,

but there is certainly scope to investigate the area further and more fully. Further research could be taken in a number of directions, such as directly interviewing some of the undergraduate participants in order to explore their perceptions further. The relationship between Subject Librarians and archive and special collections service was touched upon in both the literature review and results chapters but could also be developed as a separate study. Postgraduate students would also make an interesting survey population to scope their views and possibly consider how their motivations differ from undergraduate students. The service at the University of Gloucestershire is planning to implement an online archive catalogue during the 2014-2015 academic year, and a study investigating the impact of this on use of the service by both undergraduates and other types of user would be beneficial.

6.7 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate undergraduate use of university archives and special collections with a view to increasing usage by this group of students. The literature review and results have shown there are many motivations and barriers affecting student use of university archives and special collections, but also many techniques such a service can adopt to increase undergraduate use. The most successful technique would seem to be embedding archives and special collections material into current teaching, and a close working relationship with academic tutors is critical to this. In order to increase teaching, services need to promote their existence in the first instance and equip both undergraduates and academics with key information such as contact details and what the service does. Basic orientation sessions for both groups are essential although hampered by time constraints. Subject Librarians could be useful contacts to disseminate basic contact details to both academics and undergraduates.

Despite these pressures and constraints, this study has found that undergraduates have a genuine desire to find out more about archives and special collections, and academic staff emulate that same desire for working with the service and find it a valuable contribution to the university community. Undergraduates think it is important such materials exist and are preserved, but often do not fully understand why. When students do engage with material through archive teaching sessions they felt satisfied and motivated to become repeat users of the service. Such results are a major motivating factor for higher education archivists to discover ways of increasing undergraduate use of university archives and special collections, and the author hopes this study has contributed to this landscape.

Bibliography

- Anon., *Collections and Collecting: A Survey of University Archives* (London: The National Archives, October 2009). Retrieved from <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/collections-and-collecting-report-2009.pdf> on 2 February 2014
- Bahde, A., 'Taking the Show on the Road: Special Collections Instruction in the Campus Classroom' in *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts and Cultural Heritage* Vol. 12 No. 2 (2011)
- Braun, V. & V. Clarke, *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2013)
- Briston, H., 'Student as Historian/ Student as Historical Actor: Documenting the Student Experience at the University of Oregon' in E. Mitchell, P. Seiden & S. Taraba (eds.), *Past or Portal? Enhancing Undergraduate Learning through Special Collections and Archives* (Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2012)
- Bryman, A., *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)
- Chute, T. G., 'Selling the College and University Archives: Current Outreach Perspectives' in *Archival Issues* Vol. 25 No. 1-2 (2000)
- Creswell, J. W. & V. L. Plano Clark, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2007)
- Cullingford, A., *The Special Collections Handbook* (London: Facet Publishing, 2011)
- Duff, W. M. & J. M. Cherry, 'Archival Orientation for Undergraduate Students: An Exploratory Study of Impact' in *The American Archivist* Vol. 71 No. 2 (Fall – Winter 2008)
- Gomm, R., *Social Research Methodology: A Critical Introduction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004)
- Harris, V. A. & A. C. Weller, 'Use of Special Collections as an Opportunity for Outreach in the Academic Library', in *Journal of Library Administration* Vol. 52 No. 3-4 (2012)
- Hart, C. *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Imagination* (London: Sage Publications, 1998)
- Herbert, N., *Rarely Sited: A mixed methods study of community engagement in special collections in Cambridge University Colleges* (Unpublished masters thesis, Aberystwyth University, 2011)
- Johnson, G., 'Introducing Undergraduate Students to Archives and Special Collections' in *College & Undergraduate Libraries* Vol. 13 No. 2 (2006)

Johnston, R. D., *A Qualitative Study of the Experiences of Novice Undergraduate Students with Online Finding Aids* (Unpublished masters thesis, School of Information and Library Science, University of North Carolina, November 2008). Retrieved from <http://ils.unc.edu/mspapers/3452.pdf> 11 December 2013

Jones, B. M., 'Hidden Collections, Scholarly Barriers: Creating Access to Unprocessed Special Collections Materials in America's Research Libraries' in *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* Vol. 5 No. 2 (2004)

Krause, M. G., "'It Makes History Alive for them": the Role of Archivists and Special Collections Librarians in Instructing Undergraduates', in *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* Vol. 36 No. 5 (2010)

Kruger, R. A. & M. A. Casey, *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2000)

Kumar, R., *Research Methodology: a step-by-step guide for beginners* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2011)

Lossoff, B., C. Sinkinson & E. Newsom, 'Special Collections Instruction in the Sciences: A Collaborative Model' in E. Mitchell, P. Seiden & S. Taraba (eds.), *Past or Portal? Enhancing Undergraduate Learning through Special Collections and Archives* (Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2012)

Malkmus, D., "'Pulling on the White Gloves... is Really Sort of Magic": Report on Engaging History Undergraduates with Primary Sources', in E. Mitchell, P. Seiden & S. Taraba (eds.), *Past or Portal? Enhancing Undergraduate Learning through Special Collections and Archives* (Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2012)

Mangione, T. W., 'Mail Surveys: Improving the Quality' (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995) in A. Bryman, *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)

Mulder, M. & C. Jones, 'Putting the Material in Materiality: The Embedded Special Collections Librarian' in E. Mitchell, P. Seiden & S. Taraba (eds.), *Past or Portal? Enhancing Undergraduate Learning through Special Collections and Archives* (Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2012)

Robyns, M. C., 'The Archivist as Educator: Integrating Critical Thinking Skills into Historical Research' in *The American Archivist* Vol. 64 No. 2 (Fall-Winter 2001)

Roff, S., 'Archives, Documents, and Hidden History: A Course to Teach Undergraduates the Thrill of Historical Discovery Real and Virtual' in *The History Teacher* Vol. 40 No. 4 (August 2007)

Samuelson, T. & C. Coker, 'Mind the Gap: Integrating Special Collections Teaching' in *portal: Libraries and the Academy* Vol. 14 No. 1 (2014)

Seals, N. M., 'Building a New Model: Faculty-Archivist Collaboration in Architectural Studies' in E. Mitchell, P. Seiden & S. Taraba (eds.), *Past or Portal? Enhancing Undergraduate Learning through Special Collections and Archives* (Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2012)

Stam, D. C., 'Bridge That Gap! Education and Special Collections' in *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts and Cultural Heritage* Vol. 7 No. 1 (2006)

Swain, E. D., 'College Student as Archives' Consultant? A New Approach to Outreach Programming on Campus' in *Archival Issues* Vol. 29 No. 2 (2005)

Walworth, J., 'Oxford University: 'Speed-dating' in Special Collections: A Case Study' in E. Mitchell, P. Seiden & S. Taraba (eds.), *Past or Portal? Enhancing Undergraduate Learning through Special Collections and Archives* (Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2012)

Whittaker, B. M., "'Get It, Catalog It, Promote It": New Challenges to Providing Access to Special Collections' in *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts and Cultural Heritage* Vol. 7 No. 2 (2006)

Wisker, G, *The Postgraduate Research Handbook: Succeed with your MA, MPhil, EdD and PhD* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008)

Wosh, P. J., J. Bunde, K. Murphy & C. Blacker, 'University Archives and Educational Partnerships: Three Perspectives', in *Archival Issues* Vol. 31 No. 1 (2007)

Yakel, E., 'Listening to Users' in *Archival Issues* Vol. 26 No. 2 (2002)

Yakel, E. & D. A. Torres, 'AI: Archival Intelligence and User Expertise' in *The American Archivist* Vol. 66 No. 1 (Spring-Summer 2003)

Zhou, X., 'Student Archival Research Activity: An Exploratory Study', in *The American Archivist* Vol. 71 No. 2 (Fall-Winter 2008)

Websites

<http://www.archivalmetrics.org/> retrieved 6 May 2014

<http://archivelearning.blogspot.co.uk/2013/05/ales-annual-conference-bridging-gap.html>
retrieved 6 February 2014

<http://www.archivesandcreativepractice.com/> retrieved 9 April 2014

www.archiveshub.ac.uk retrieved 3 September 2014

<http://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/27107/StatementofEthicalPractice.pdf> retrieved 19 July 2014

www.doodle.com retrieved 1 July 2014

<http://dustyarchivekittendeaths.tumblr.com/> retrieved 6 May 2014

<http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/search/basic?sid=62177381-5dd8-4933-b116-f3ce630a9001%40sessionmgr111&vid=1&hid=115> (The Discovery Service at the University of Gloucestershire Libraries) retrieved 5 April 2014

www.glos.ac.uk retrieved 3 February 2014

www.glos.ac.uk/archives retrieved 3 February 2014

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/changes-to-tuition-fees-and-higher-education> retrieved 4 September 2014

<http://insight.glos.ac.uk/DEPARTMENTS/EMPLOYABILITY/Pages/default.aspx> retrieved 3 June 2014

<http://www.jstor.org/> retrieved 5 April 2014

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archon/ retrieved 3 September 2014

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/enhancing-impact-inspiring-excellence.htm> retrieved 6 February 2014

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/national-fairground-archive.htm> retrieved 9 April 2014

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/exhibitions/online/about.aspx> retrieved 17 April 2014

<http://opac.glos.ac.uk/> (University of Gloucestershire Library Catalogue) retrieved 3 September 2014

http://primo.aber.ac.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?dsent=1&dstmp=1396700422524&vid=ABERU_VU1&fromLogin=true (Aberystwyth University Library Catalogue) retrieved 5 April 2014

<http://scholar.google.co.uk/> retrieved 5 April 2014

www.surveymonkey.com retrieved 1 July 2014

<http://viewer.soton.ac.uk/viewer/image/basque1/1/#head> retrieved 17 April 2014

www.worditout.com retrieved 18 August 2014

Appendix A - Literature Review Search Terms

- 'Archive + Undergraduate'
- 'Special Collections + Undergraduate'
- 'Archive + Outreach'
- 'Special Collections + Outreach'
- 'Special collections'
- 'University + Archive'
- 'College + Archive'
- 'University Library + Undergraduate'
- 'Archive instruction'
- 'Archive + Collaboration'
- 'Community Outreach + Archive'
- 'Undergraduate Education + Archive'
- 'Archive + Teaching'
- 'Special Collection + Teaching'
- 'Archive + Academic'
- 'Special Collection + Academic'

Appendix B – Undergraduate Student Survey

Undergraduate use of archives and special collections

Thank you for your interest in completing this survey on undergraduate use of university archives and special collections

The purpose of the survey is to investigate undergraduate use of university archives and special collections for a dissertation as part of an MSc Econ in Archive Administration at Aberystwyth University

By completing this survey, you consent to take part in the study. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without giving a reason

Data collected will be used anonymously, and destroyed six months after confirmation of the dissertation grade

You may choose to fill in your name and contact details at the end of the survey for the chance to win a £30 Amazon voucher. This information will be treated separately from the rest of the survey and will not be used to identify the participant in any way in the dissertation

This survey is carried out in adherence to Aberystwyth University's Department of Information Studies Ethics Policy and The British Sociological Association's Statement of Ethical Practice (<http://www.britisoc.co.uk/equality/>). If you have any queries about participating in the survey, please contact Louise Clough via lclough@glos.ac.uk

General Knowledge

1. What course are you studying?

2. Do you know the University provides a University Archives and Special Collections service?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

3. What do you think the University Archives and Special Collections service does?

4. Do you know students can use this service for research?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Undergraduate use of archives and special collections

5. Have you heard of any of the following collections? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ University Archive
- ☐ Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society (BGAS) Library
- ☐ Gloucestershire Poets, Writers and Artists (GPWA) Collection
- ☐ Local Heritage Initiative (LHI) Collection
- ☐ Forest of Dean Sculpture Trail Collection
- ☐ None

6. Do you know where the University Archives and Special Collections are located?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. Have you ever used the Social Learning Zone at FCH?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

8. Do you know the difference between an archives and special collections service and a library?

9. Do you know how archive material is organised and catalogued?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. Do you know what a "finding aid" is?

Use

11. Have you ever used the University Archives and Special Collections?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Undergraduate use of archives and special collections

12. If yes, was this because of coursework, personal interest or another reason? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Coursework
☐ Personal Interest

Other (please specify)

13. If yes, what did you think of the facilities in the University Archives and Special Collections e.g. ease of access, helpfulness of staff, surroundings?

14. Have you ever had a teaching session in the archives as part of your course?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

15. If yes, did you make a return visit to the service after your teaching session?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

16. How satisfied were you with your teaching session?

Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. What was the best thing about the teaching session?

18. What was the worst thing about the teaching session?

19. Are you confident how to access University Archives and Special Collections material?

Very Confident	Confident	Neither Confident or Unsure	Unsure	Very Unsure
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Access

Undergraduate use of archives and special collections

20. Current opening hours are 9am - 5pm weekdays. Would evening and weekend hours encourage you to use the service?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

21. The service does not currently have an online archive catalogue to search our collections. Would you be more inclined to use our collections if you could search them online?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

22. Would you be more inclined to use our collections if they were digitised and available to view online e.g. photographic material?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

23. Would you consider using an online tutorial or video on how to use archives?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Maybe (please specify)

Advertising

24. Have you used the University Archives and Special Collections website and/ or blog? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Website
☐ Blog
☐ Neither

25. Have you seen any posts about the University Archives and Special Collections on the Student News or Library News websites or the Libraries Facebook page? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Student News
☐ Library News
☐ Libraries Facebook page
☐ None

Undergraduate use of archives and special collections

26. Have you seen any displays of archive and special collections material e.g. in the Crush Hall or Social Learning Zone at FCH?

☐ Yes

☐ No

27. Do you have any suggestions on how best to advertise the University Archives and Special Collections to students?

Attitudes

28. Please describe "archives and special collections" in one word

29. Is it important for the University to keep archives and special collections?

30. How easy do you think it is to use archive material?

Very Easy

Easy

Neither Easy or Difficult

Difficult

Very Difficult



31. Do you think the University Archives and Special Collections are relevant to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Maybe (please specify)

32. How can the service be made more relevant to you?

33. The service collects material that documents today's student experience. Did you know you can deposit your own work into the University Archive?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Undergraduate use of archives and special collections

34. Are you interested in finding out more about the service?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

35. Would you be interested in a DegreePlus internship in the University Archives and Special Collections?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Relationships

36. Do you know who the University Archives and Special Collections staff are?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

37. Would you feel able to ask archives and special collections staff for help?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

38. Do you know how to contact the service?

39. Has your Subject Librarian ever mentioned the University Archives and Special Collections?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

40. Have any of your academic tutors ever mentioned the University Archives and Special Collections?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

41. Please use this space to add any final comments about the University Archives and Special Collections

Undergraduate use of archives and special collections

42. Thank you for completing this survey

If you would like to find out more about the University Archives and Special Collections, please contact Louise Clough via lclough@glos.ac.uk

If you would like the chance to win a £30 Amazon voucher, please enter you name and contact email address in the box below. This information will not be linked to the responses above

The winner will be notified by email by the 17th April 2014

Appendix C – Undergraduate Survey Invitation Email

Subject: Win a £30 Amazon voucher!
Date: 17 March 2014 10:32:58

Dear Student,

I would like to invite you to take a 10 minute online survey for the chance to win a £30 Amazon voucher.

The survey is part of my masters dissertation on undergraduate use of archives. It does not matter if you have never heard of archives! I am trying to collect the views of a range of students, and your answers will be treated anonymously.

Further information and the survey itself can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HLQBTvH>. The survey closes on Monday 7th April.

If you have any queries please get in touch.

Many thanks,

Louise

Louise Clough
Assistant University Archivist

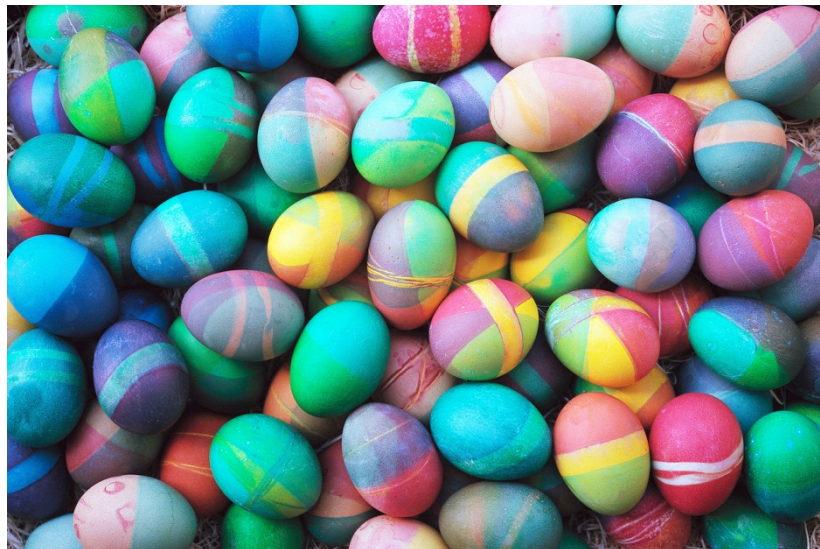
University Archives and Special Collections
Archive Room (QU024)
University of Gloucestershire
Francis Close Hall
Swindon Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 4AZ

01242 714851
archives@glos.ac.uk

www.glos.ac.uk/archives
www.uogarchives.blogspot.co.uk

FREE EASTER EGGS!

PLUS THE CHANCE TO WIN A £30 AMAZON VOUCHER!



DO YOU HAVE 15 MINUTES TO SPARE?

**UNDERGRADUATES NEEDED TO PILOT AN ONLINE
QUESTIONNAIRE**

**COME AND SEE LOUISE ON THE DESK IN THE
SOCIAL LEARNING ZONE (QU024)**

Appendix E - Participant Consent Form

This focus group forms part of a dissertation on undergraduate use of archives and special collections. The facilitator of the group is studying for an MSc Econ in Archive Administration at Aberystwyth University. Her supervisor is Dr Julie Mathias.

The study follows the ethical guidelines of The British Sociological Association and Aberystwyth University's Department of Information Studies. Copies of both are available from the facilitator on request.

The facilitator's details are:

Louise Clough

lclough@glos.ac.uk

01242 715404

I consent to taking part in the focus group on undergraduate use of archives and special collections. I understand that participation is voluntary, and I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. I understand that all data collected will remain confidential, and I will not be individually identified.

I consent to the focus group being sound-recorded, and understand that this recording will be destroyed six months after confirmation of the result of the masters dissertation on which this study is based.

I understand a copy of the completed dissertation will be held at the Thomas Parry Library, Aberystwyth University, and may also be included on Cadair, Aberystwyth University's online institutional repository. I understand the completed dissertation may be accessed and cited by future researchers, and the facilitator may write about the study in future published articles.

I confirm I am over the age of 18.

Signed

Name

Date

Appendix F - Academic Focus Group Questions

Question 1 - What are archives and special collections?

Question 2 - What do you think motivates undergraduates to use archives and special collections?

Question 3 - What are the barriers preventing undergraduates from using archives and special collections? 'Barriers' can be physical and/ or non-physical

Question 4 - Are archives relevant to undergraduates?

Question 5 - What role can academics play in encouraging undergraduate use of archives and special collections?

Question 6 - How can archive services promote themselves to undergraduates?

Question 7 - How can undergraduate access to archive material be improved?

Question 8 - How important are archive teaching sessions for engaging with undergraduates?

Question 9 - How can archives services best work with students to record their collective memory and experiences?

Appendix G - Aberystwyth University Department of Information Studies

Ethics Policy

1 Context

Styles of research (and coursework) within the Department of Information Studies (DIS) are diverse and subject to change, not least because Information researchers work within a variety of settings. Research within the Department is based primarily on archival and library sources supplemented by public opinion surveys, participant observation and interviews. The Department's *Ethics Policy for Research* covers all research which is survey-based, reliant on interviews and involving audio or audio-visual taping where issues of confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent arise.

The term 'researchers' in this policy refers to all DIS staff and students collecting and/or analysing data from human participants for any purpose. 'Researchers' therefore include all contracted staff and all students: undergraduate, postgraduate, doctorate; full time, part-time and distance learning.

In carrying out their work, DIS researchers inevitably face ethical dilemmas which arise out of competing obligations and conflicts of interest. Therefore, the *DIS Ethics Policy for Research* aims to:

- i. alert researchers to ethical issues involved with human participants or their data
- ii. provide foundation principles for the conduct of research (and/or collating evidence for coursework) which involves human participants or their data.

2 Ethical guidelines

DIS researchers must follow relevant guidelines for ethical practice and procedures in the conduct of their research (and/or collating evidence for coursework).

2a Foundation guidelines

Researchers conducting research with human participants, or their data, must follow:

The policy of AU Ethics Committee for Research Procedures

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/quality-assurance/research-practice/section-4/>

The current Data Protection Act <http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/infocompliance/>

The policy of AU Records Management/Information Governance e.g. data storage, access to data, security, procedures to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, and record/data disposal <http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/infocompliance/>

DIS Ethics Policy for Research detailed in this document (and available online via the Department's VLE, under *Ethics Forum*) <http://vle.dis.aber.ac.uk/login/index.php>

The British Sociological Association (BSA) Statement of Ethical Practice (word doc) for guidelines on professional integrity, responsibilities towards participants, informed consent, covert research, anonymity, privacy and confidentiality <http://www.britsoc.co.uk/equality/>

2b Relevant professional guidelines

- British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Ethics and Conduct (March 2006) <http://www.bps.org.uk/what-we-do/ethics-standards/ethics-standards>
 - British Educational Research Association (BERA) Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research, 2011 <http://www.bera.ac.uk/guidelines>
 - (NHS) National Research Ethics Service (NRES) <http://www.nres.npsa.nhs.uk/>
 - Chartered Institute of Information Professionals (CILIP) <http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/policy/ethics/Pages/default.aspx>
 - The Archive & Records Management Association UK & Ireland (ARA) http://www.archives.org.uk/images/documents/DP_codeofpractice_Oct_2007.pdf
 - The British Computer Society's Health Informatics Forum (BCS HIF) <http://www.bcs.org/category/8620>
- The Higher Education Academy, Information and Computer Sciences
<http://www.ics.heacademy.ac.uk/>

3 Ethical Principles for DIS Research

The **BSA Statement of Ethical Practice** <http://www.britsoc.co.uk/equality/> provides detailed guidelines on ethics in research for DIS researchers to follow.

In addition, the following points are emphasised for DIS researchers:

3 a. Protection from Harm. Research in the Department must not expose any participant to physical or psychological conditions different from those experienced in everyday life. Staff research proposals which fall within this category are approved by the Head of Department or his/her representative, normally the Department's Director of Research. Student research proposals are approved by the dissertation supervisor or relevant coursework module coordinator. Further details about ethical procedures are provided in Section 5.

3 b. Vulnerable situations. Research proposals which may expose participants or researchers to physical or psychological conditions which are above that experienced in everyday life must be assessed initially by the University's *Ethics Committee for Research Procedures*

3 c. Vulnerable participants. Research proposals which may involve ‘vulnerable’ participants (e.g. children or young people under 18, prisoners, hospital patients, adults with learning difficulties, etc) must be assessed initially by the University’s *Ethics Committee for Research Procedures*.

3 d. Researchers’ responsibilities. Researchers are required to recognise the responsibility to safeguard the proper interests of those involved in, or affected by their work, and to report their findings accurately and truthfully. They must consider the consequences of their work or its misuse for those studied and for other parties. Researchers have a responsibility to ensure that research projects comply with principles of confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent. Due note must be taken of national laws and administrative regulations (Data Protection Acts, the Human Rights Act, copyright and libel laws) which may affect the conduct of their research, data dissemination and storage, publication, rights of research subjects, of sponsors and so forth.

3 e. Participants’ rights. Researchers must endeavour to protect the rights of those they study, their interests, sensitivity and privacy. As far as possible, participation in research should be based on the freely given informed consent of those involved. This implies a responsibility to explain in appropriate detail what the research is about, who is undertaking and financing it, why it is being undertaken, and how it is to be disseminated and used. Research participants must be made aware of their right to refuse participation whenever and for whatever reason they wish. Research participants should understand how far they will be afforded anonymity and confidentiality, and they should be able to reject the use of data-gathering devices such as tape recorders and video cameras. Participants in research projects should receive a formal letter explaining research aims and ethical commitments.

3 f. Informed consent. Participants’ agreement to participate must be given on a voluntary and informed basis. Informed consent does not necessarily imply or require a particular written or signed form. It is the quality of the consent, rather than the format, which is important. Informed consent may therefore require an ongoing discussion with research subjects about the nature of their involvement in the research project, about risks and about potential benefits. For example, if photographs documenting their participation in a particular event or situation could prove incriminating if viewed by a wider audience, then this eventuality must be discussed.

3 g. Predicting consequences. Communication of research material must not be provided to audiences other than those to which research participants have agreed. Where there is a likelihood that data may be shared with other researchers, the potential uses to which the data might be put must be discussed with research participants and consent obtained for the use of the material. Interviewers should clarify whether, and if so, the extent to which research participants are allowed to see transcripts of interviews, to alter the content, to withdraw statements and to provide additional information and reinterpretations. Clarification should be provided as to the extent to which they will be consulted prior to publication. It is therefore incumbent on researchers to be aware of the possible consequences of their work. Wherever possible, they should attempt to anticipate and to guard against consequences for research participants that can be predicted to be harmful.

3 h. Anonymity. The anonymity and privacy of those who participate in the research process must be respected. Where possible, threats to the confidentiality and anonymity of research data should be anticipated by researchers. The identities and records of those participating in research must be kept confidential if confidentiality has been requested. Confidential material must be retained for the exclusive use of the relevant researcher or researchers. Appropriate measures must exist to store research data in a secure manner. Where appropriate and practicable, methods for preserving anonymity must be used including the removal of identifiers, the use of pseudonyms and other technical means for breaking the link between data and identifiable individuals. Researchers are required to take care to prevent data being published or released in a form that would permit the actual or potential identification of research participants without prior written consent. Where necessary, anonymity must be protected by storing material in two sites – e.g. in the senior researcher's office and in a departmental office supervised by a designated departmental administrator. Research material must always be stored in such a way as to prevent the compilation of material which can lead to the accidental disclosure of research participants' identities. Despite every effort to preserve anonymity, it must be made clear to research participants that anonymity may be compromised unintentionally.

3 i. Confidentiality. Participants must be made aware in writing of the likely limits of confidentiality and must not be promised greater confidentiality than can be realistically guaranteed. There may be fewer compelling grounds for extending guarantees of privacy or confidentiality to governments, public organisations and other public bodies. Where the public interest dictates, obligations of trust and protection may weigh less heavily. Nevertheless, where guarantees have been given they must be honoured unless there are clear and compelling public interests not to do so. These obligations must not be discarded lightly.

4 Collecting workplace data for coursework

4 a. Some assignments, especially distance learning assignments, may require the examination of a service by focusing on an actual service, either the service the student is employed in or another service which is being operated by practicing professionals in the field. Such exercises provide valuable training and learning opportunities but may occasionally give rise to a dilemma in deciding which matters/details are appropriate for discussion in a student assignment and which are the proper preserve of internal management operations within the organisation in question.

4 b. In such cases, the use of evidence from or about individuals or groups of individuals for coursework assignments must follow DIS and AU Ethical principles outlined above.

4 c. In addition:

i. An assignment which is part of academic study is not expected to trespass on matters which relate to internal management style within a host organization, and is not the same as a consultant's report.

- ii. Professional colleagues are generous in welcoming students who are pursuing projects on professional subjects, and mutual trust is important to both parties.
- iii. If a student aims to include data/comments/responses collected in workplace conversation or interview or other method, then these must be checked for consent to use, anonymity, confidentiality and accuracy, at least.
- iv. Students must focus on the subject matter which the project/assignment requires. Data collected expressly for the purposes of the assignment must be managed following the University's Records Management Policy and securely destroyed once the assignment marks have been approved by the Faculty Examinations Board.

Notes

DIS Ethics Committee 2003-9: (HoD)GWH/GEE, CJU & TAR

DIS Ethics Committee 2009-10: (HoD)GEE, DPE & TAR

DIS Ethics Committee 2010-12: (HoD)GEE, AEF, JBP & TAR

URLs updated 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 (TAR)

Policy written by Christine Urquhart (CJU) & Tanya Rogers (TAR), September 2003.

Policy confirmed at DIS Departmental Board, 8 October 2003.

Policy amended AU Ethics Committee for Research Procedures, 21 July 2004.

Original policy documents located X:_DIS Repository/Policies/Ethics

Appendix H - Example of Coded Focus Group Transcript

Attitudes to archives and special collections – pink

Subject-specific collections and research – blue

Physical access and use – purple

Digital access and use – green

Relationships with academics – red

Facilities and space - orange

Library v. archive resources and skills – brown

Teaching and student interaction - yellow

Facilitator: I'm the facilitator, so I'm going to try not to get too involved in the conversation. The questions start quite simply and then get a bit more detailed. So the first question is what do 'archives and special collections' mean to you when you hear the term?

Participant 1: Well, you know, as a historian [laughs] they mean everything don't they really. They mean the tools of my trade essentially. Special collections implies kind of something slightly different to er what you might imagine erm an ordinary archive to me you know, it's special it's been designated, it has a special particular purpose. Will that do? [laughs]

Participant 2: Erm, for me as a biologist probably not as much as they should erm, if I was thinking about archives and special collections I would be interested if it was looking at old natural history records, something like that, something that is directly relevant to my discipline. Erm, most of my work is outdoors rather than in archives so for me it's something that I know the University has, and I've come into the archives area but I've never really used it other than to go through an old thesis that was on microfiche about 8 years ago.

Participant 1: But I should also say I suppose that it's, you know, as a lecturer here, erm, when you talk about archives and special collections here [emphasis on word 'here'] you know, there's a two-fold purpose isn't there. There's a two-fold purpose to every archive you know, you use it as a set of ready tools of your trade, you know, kind of research-driven agenda erm but also as a teaching-driven agenda as well you know and erm, historians and history at UoG [University of Gloucestershire] is very keen [emphasis on 'keen'] to ensure that we work as closely with the archive erm as possible. Erm, it doesn't always work that way for very good reasons that we can go into later on erm, but erm you know, the aspiration is always there.

Facilitator: And do you think if we had special collections that were kind of more tailored towards biosciences, do you think that would change your perception of them?

Participant 2: Yes I think so, particularly from a teaching perspective, either as an undergraduate resource or probably more particularly as a specialist research for dissertation students be that at undergraduate or postgraduate level.

Participant 1: They represent a unique opportunity for students to experience first-hand original research, really... [pause] that's one of the main selling points

Facilitator: Ok. Ok so next question is what do you think motivates undergraduates to use archives and special collections?

Participant 1: The lecturers I'm afraid to say [laughs] it isn't self-motivation erm, I sometimes wonder if, and I don't really have evidence for this erm, but I [inaudible] the way that they're taught at school and A-level doesn't set them up for the idea of using an archive you know their kind of the documents are given to them, facsimiles usually, obviously, erm and in many ways we in our teaching we perpetuate that here. Erm, you'll have material up on moodle which is fantastic [facilitator shakes head] no not you but erm we will...

Facilitation: Yeah

Participant 1: ...lecturers will put material up on moodle which can erm often be and often is erm copies of documents but we rarely erm send the student to the archive. And erm and that phrase is absolutely apposite I don't think students would darken your doorstep if erm we didn't say 'you have to go and complete this project'. So yeah.

Participant 2: So do you think from that that actually putting things on moodle and very much steering them actually prevents them sort of self-discovering?

Participant 1: Yeah in a way I do. Yeah there's this erm you know the cruder phrase is spoon feeding isn't it really...

Participant 2: Mmmm

Participant 1: ...and there is a danger that erm VLEs like moodle and kind of the teaching style we adopt here erm does [emphasise word 'does'] put everything in front of the student...

Participant 2: Mmmm

Participant 1: ...doesn't give them the opportunity

Participant 2: It's quite interesting because as I say for Biology we don't use the archive but we do very much work from primary literature in terms of journal articles and we quite rarely direct them particularly, we might give them one journal article to spur them on their way but we will then say it is independent research and this is from the very first essay the do in the first year...

Participant 1: Mmmm

Participant 2: ...and that we expect them to do that from what we would refer to as 'primary academic literature' so journal articles and we do get them to search those out themselves and go into the Library...

Participant 1: Yeah

Participant 2: ...journal archives and so on so we don't use it as the archives but that kind of idea of finding out that material, searching it out we certainly do

Participant 1: Yeah no I mean don't get me wrong its not that erm everything is handed to the student on a plate its to facilitate their own enquiries...

Participant 2: Mmmm

Participant 1: using the VLE erm the material is there erm student I know you know you might have a seminar session erm built around that document...

Participant 2: Yeah

Participant 1: Erm and of course the issue is, and it's a very good issue is two-fold, you know if you were em had a group of say 30 students all trying to access one original document, well the archivist is going to have a heart attack because the document's going to get trashed if you're not careful erm, and also erm you know 30 students with the best will in the world a large percentage of them will arrive at the same time just before the module is going to run, and so something like putting it up on moodle is by far the better solution...

Participant 2: Yeah

Participant 1: ...but it doesn't drive them into the archive I'm afraid which is what your question started out

Facilitator: We don't currently have an archive area on moodle which I think could help because if we had an archive hub on there and then that linked to the various courses...

Participant 1: I think that's a fantastic idea, genuinely fantastic idea and you know erm as many courses as wanted could work with you and say look we could really do with this kind of document scanned, digitised, whacked up on there and then we can use it. That's a brilliant idea, really really good

Participant 2: Or even, I don't know where we've got to with the University having a research repository, it keeps on being mentioned and goes quiet and being mentioned and going quiet but even you know having a repository like that not necessarily in other words not necessarily having it as moodle, might work brilliantly as moodle but it might also work as a repository that courses can link to...

Participant 1: Sure

Participant 2: ...from that, I don't know

Participant 1: Beauty of moodle is of course students are familiar with it, you know...

Participant 2: I'm just thinking of linking between moodle sites that was all, which might be... more challenging

Participant 1: Yeah that's true [laughter] don't know anything about the technology